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REFLECTIONS OF RUSSIA

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE ENGLISH GOVERNESS

IN

TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

LONDON:

EASTERN EUROPE

AND

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"REVELATIONS OF RUSSIA;" "THE WHITE SLAVE."

R

VOL. III.

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CHAPTER I.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS AND HIS ADVISERS.

Russia is not a country commonly visited by tourists. The traveller who attempts to quit the beaten track of communication between St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, or Odessa, is soon turned back in disgust by the inconvenient formalities which at every step arrest his progress, whilst there is nothing to excite the adventurous spirit whose energy positive prohibition or actual danger might have roused.

Natives, and resident foreigners, habitually cautious in expressing their opinions, become doubly guarded in their intercourse with strangers, whose indiscretion may prove so dangerous. It is absurd, therefore, to look to any but residents for a true picture of the condition of that country; but residents having usually acquired such knowledge as they possess in the government service, or in a diplomatic

or commercial capacity, are nearly always restrained by prudential considerations from incurring the enmity of the Russian government, by publishing to the world the results of their experience.

The same causes which long deterred those who could have thrown light upon the subject from writing books, and which prevented Russians from exposing the character of their government, naturally operated to hinder them from vindicating by their testimony the truth of the first writers who undertook the task; and hence it became easy for the agents of the Russian cabinet to involve in doubt the veracity of statements which the public mind of Western Europe was unprepared to receive, and which were of a nature so startling as to require corroboration and evidence.

When the Marquis de Custine first endeavoured to raise the veil which misreprensentation had drawn over the condition of the Russian empire, he conveyed to the world the impressions of a traveller to whom some of the imprisoned had ventured to confide the secrets of their prison-house, —to whom they had shown the barbarous reverse of the scenery so plausibly imaging civilisation; and with the horror and alarm of one startled by discovering beneath a kid glove, the bloody hand of the

executioner pressing his own, he hastened to communicate his discovery to the western public; but incoherently, and incompletely, as it had been made.

These imperfections were taken advantage of to turn his book into ridicule; and the comments which it called forth from the press served to show what silent progress had been made since 1831, 2, 3, 4, 5, in dissipating the unpopularity of which the Russian government was then the object.

A very high literary and political authority did not even hesitate to pronounce the Emperor Nicholas "one of the best and wisest princes who had ever ruled over any people,"—an assertion which it is to be presumed that the periodical in question would not now care to repeat,—at least if we may judge from its long subsequent silence.

At this time, confirming in detail the general denunciations of the marquis, appeared the "Revelations of Russia," which, as the author has had occasion to observe elsewhere, was at first received with mistrust, but acquired, and continues (to a third edition) acquiring, authenticity by the investigation to which it has led. Since that period many books have become popular, or have been published, tending to throw light on a subject to

which the writer trusts that he has not vainly devoted his exertions. Each one of these publications has in some measure tended to confirm the revolting picture drawn by those preceding it. A remarkable change has in consequence taken place in public opinion respecting Russia. There are now few men in constitutional countries who do not admit the existence of a reprehensible system in that empire: but as too many are still prone to underrate the monstrous extent of the evil, and to judge that an afflicting picture has been drawn in exaggerated colours, it becomes necessary to call public attention to the corroboration which so many recent works afford of the very worst charges brought against that despotism, which the author conscientiously believes to be the most extensive and demoralizing that ever weighed upon humanity. This is the more necessary, as it is the only direct evidence which can be afforded of the truth of a charge of the utmost gravity;—indeed the only evidence besides that furnished by the absence of all contradiction of statements, which at least derived importance from their popular dissemination.

If hitherto it has almost exclusively fallen to the author's share to unmask the Russian despotism with the public of this country, many writers in

France and Germany have recently contributed to throw light upon the subject; and these the writer is anxious to introduce to the notice of two categories of his readers—those who feel sufficient interest in the question to consult all that has been written upon it, and those who may very naturally have been induced to consider that the author of these volumes has conducted his exposure of the Russian government with intemperate severity, or indulged in unmerited animadversions on its imperial head.

Three years ago the Russian government, profiting by certain facilities which its peculiar position afforded, had by its occult but unremitting efforts succeeded either in concealing the condition of its subjects, or in awing into silence those who could have laid it bare. Thus far it had been incredibly and unprecedentedly successful in averting the gaze of that spirit of inquiry which civilization has fostered in Western Europe, which the increased facilities of locomotion, and the growing extension of the press, have so effectually served. But that period of possible mystification is past, and truth is fast triumphing over misrepresentation. It is no longer one or two writers, but a growing host who direct converging rays of light into the dark

precincts of that mysterious empire; and its government may now with reason despair of shutting out the searching rays which no longer intrude through a single orifice, but beam in through innumerable and unthought-of chinks and crannies. Even its Russian subjects are beginning to overcome their awe of the supposed omniscience and omnipotenee of their cabinet, and either furnish materials to popular writers, or boldly appeal to the world against their tyrant. A short time since such was their dread of his long-reaching arm, that when by refusing to return within his power they had incurred hopeless and perpetual exile from their native land, they were still timorously respectful in all their allusions to the very power which they were thus practically setting at defiance. The author knew one instance of a Russian for many years attached to the legation, who having secured some property abroad, and being advanced in years, refused to return to Russia on the summons of his cabinet, and was consequently condemned to the extreme pains and penalties in such case provided by the present emperor. He applied for the purpose of obtaining naturalization as the subject of a foreign state to a distinguished fellow-countryman, who had publicly renounced his allegiance to the Tsar; but

after profiting by his assistance and advice to attain his object, when he had done so, he was careful to avoid all further connexion with a man whom he esteemed and admired, and to whom he was indebted, on the plea that this personage was so much more obnoxious to his government than an humble individual like himself, that he was fearful of needlessly increasing its irritation by frequenting his society.

The author was not long since introduced to a Russian, who had been accidentally discovered by a Sclavonian, and on one of the Parisian bridges follows the avocation of "*decrotteur*;" that is to say, cleans the boots and shoes of the passers-by who need his services. This man, on the occupation of Paris by the allies, had deserted from the Russian army, and married a French wife; since which period he has gained his livelihood by individually imparting to a portion of the French people some of that polish which his countrymen collectively have acquired, in a manner quite as superficial, from the civilized nations of the west. Thirty years' residence in France, during which he had almost forgotten his own language, together with all the jeers of his wife and his neighbours, had not sufficed to persuade him that the Russian

emperor would not get at him if his retreat were known; and the poor man was in a paroxysm of terror at the discovery of his nationality.

But it is a fact full of significance, that this mysterious discretion, which from long association formerly survived in the minds of Russian subjects and servants even their loyalty and obedience, is now beginning to thaw into communicativeness.

In exemplification of this change, since the denunciations of Custine, two books have been published on a subject a short time since so utterly unexplored,—the one entitled, "Persecutions et souffrances de l'église catholique en Russie," by a Russian ex-counsellor of state; the other, an account of the Russian Empire under the Emperor Nicholas, by Ivan Golovine, a young Russian of a family as well known in his native country as that of the Percys or Talbots in England.

Besides these have appeared the letters of Marmier on Russia; "The National Church of Russia;" and the "Mystères de Russie," by M. F. Lacroix.

All these are works well worthy of perusal, and which those ought to consult who reject as overcoloured, or doubt as unsupported, the most salient features of the accusation brought against the Russian government by the author of these pages.

The "Persecutions et souffrances de l'église catholique en Russie," by a M. d'Horer, published in the French language; and the "National Church of Russia," ("Die Staatskirche Russlands von einempriester aus der Kongregation des Oratoriums,") in the German language, by a M. Thenier,—of semi-Polish parentage, and a member of the religious association named in the first volume of this work, which treats of the Theocratic party of the Polish emigration,—though both filled with many valuable facts, are books apparently written for Romish churchmen. The first indulges in a controversial dissertation on the Greek church, the second devotes his attention to its statistics; and it is only incidentally that facts and details of so much importance are brought to light, that it becomes matter of regret with the reader that these men should not have written for a general public.

Marmier, who has been already mentioned, is a professional "*littérateur*," and for a period of his life at least might have been denominated a professional traveller. His letters, written in a spirit favourable to Russian institutions, are chiefly valuable for his admissions as he proceeds into the empire. Though a shrewd and observant man, his

opportunities, like those of the Marquis de Custine, did not suffice, even when he quitted the country, for the acquirement of any but a very superficial knowledge of it; sometimes he even falls into absurd errors, such as mentioning a nobleman accustomed to hunt the boar on the present site of a portion of St. Petersburg. He might as well have talked of a tiger hunt in an English rabbit-warren. He says somewhere that the Russian traverses the Frozen Ocean in boats which a good Norwegian seaman would think unfit to rig, and at a season when all other mariners seek refuge in the ports. In reality nothing can be more awkward and timid than the Russian sailors; and the Norwegians, to whom he compares them, are, after the Deal boatmen, the most daring men to be found on any coast in Europe.

The form of his book is also, like that of the Marquis de Custine, objectionable, when applied to the description of a country or a people; since consisting of a series of conclusions based upon the impressions of the hour, and conveyed to paper as received upon the author's mind. But the opinion of a traveller can never be so well worth recording as, when summing up, he deduces it from numerous instances, duly compared and weighed, instead of prematurely

estimating generalities from incidents which often prove exceptional. Thus, Custine, because arriving in dull weather, inveighs against the sombre sky of the north, usually so cloudless; and this false idea of hyperborean gloom hence remains on the imagination of his readers. So Marmier, on reaching St. Petersburg, observes, that "though people of the country have avowed to me the existence of venality amongst the officials, and of a vexatious spirit in the police, and that these pervade the core of Russian administration and magistracy, still I am bound to say that I have not experienced any attempt at extortion from the bureaucracy; and that I have not found it necessary to have recourse to any pecuniary means of seduction to obtain from it what I wanted."

Marmier,—as it has been observed before,—a professional *littérateur*, probably bearing according to the French custom, the designation of *homme de lettres* upon his very passport,—at all events well known as such,—was not allowed to disembark till the matter had been discussed in Benkendorf's office; and once allowed admission, all due provision made for influencing him as much as possible in favour of the government, and for concealing from him all that it was not desirable

that he should know. The watchful eyes of the secret office were upon him, and on the minor empolyés in every one of his transactions with them. But when he has travelled further into the country, and that his natural shrewdness has given him glimpses of the truth, notwithstanding the prepossession with which the attentions of higher functionaries have inspired him,—notwithstanding that he is still in some measure the apologist of slavery in the serfs, and of despotism in the government,—notwithstanding that he is full of respectful deference for its imperial head, whilst he fulminates against those more than Pariahs of Eastern Europe, the wretched Hebrews, persecuted and reviled even by those most cruelly oppressed, —still he has seen reason to change his opinion of those who administer the empire; and he observes of this body, "that it is in general one of the most venal, and to speak plainly, of the most scandalous, which has ever existed. Corruption is its normal condition, not exceptional with it. It is useless to enter the public offices without purse in hand, and no solution of the most legitimate demand can be obtained without paying money down. The greater its importance, the greater number of offices it must filter through, and the more it

costs to obtain any decision. Venality extends like an infection from the highest sphere of government down to the lacqueys who act as porters of the antechamber doors. Even the magistracy,—that noble body in France so justly venerated, so solemn in its deliberations, so austere in its decisions,—is in Russia deeply sunk in the slough of sordid calculation and corruption.

"I have heard related in Russia infamous collusions,—infamous arbitrary acts committed by those to whom the defence of the weak and the protection of the orphan is intrusted; and these things were related to me by Russsians, with glowing cheeks, and indignation in their hearts; for they were men, who having travelled in France, had witnessed the dignity with which our courts fulfil their imposing duties."

He quotes the words of a young Russian landed proprietor, who informed him "that the hideous wound which afflicts us (the Russians) is not only owing to the inadequate remuneration which our magistracy and administrative officials receive, but it has eaten like a leprosy into the very muscles of the Russian people. It is no longer an accidental condition, but a chronic malady. I know a judicial district consisting of forty officials, between whom

as salary the government distributes £220 per annum. Yet each of these officials keeps a droshky, and drinks occasionally his champagne at twelve shillings per bottle. If the government were to raise their pay five-fold, it would not enable them to continue upon that alone their present mode of life. They therefore plunder right and left as much as they can. If they are called into a village to take cognisance of a robbery or murder, they always begin by incarcerating the wealthiest peasant in the parish, and never release him, till, like the alguazils of Gil Blas, they have extorted from him a good share of his property. If he resist or protest, they apply torture; and torture is a terrible power. Sometimes in the long run they reach the real culprit, and if he possess any ready-money, they politely ease him of it, afterwards relating to each other with exultation in satanic orgies the stratagems they have devised, and the means they have employed to increase the amount of their revenues."

"But," asked Marmier, "when you have been subjected to such extortion, can you not appeal from the secondary official who has been guilty of it, to his chief, whose duty it is to watch over the administration of his department?"

"Ah," replies his informant, "you do not know our administration; it is at once a compound of the most continuous illegality, and the most tedious formula. Should we venture on reclamation, even supposing its admission by the superior to whom it is addressed, an inquiry would be set on foot—and what an inquiry! Evidence must be invoked, audiences must be solicited; and official barriers arresting the plaintiff's progress could only be removed by the most profuse bribery. Sometimes promises, at others presents must be lavished to obtain a quarter of an hour's interview with a judge; and all this trouble would he incurred only to be eventually nonsuited, after drawing down upon our heads the inextinguishable hatred of a whole cohort of officials, in whose power we are daily placed."

The author will have occasion to return to Marmier, in treating of the Hebrews in the Russian empire.

Let us now pass to the "Mystères de Russie," by M. Frederic Lacroix, which appeared in numbers shortly after the publication of "The Revelations of Russia."

Its object is chiefly, by means of anecdote, to illustrate the condition of that country.

A portion of these anecdotes refer to a period too remote, considering the rapid growth of the Russian empire, to afford any argument on the present condition or character of its people. The mutual cruelties of the loyalists and rebels in the last Irish rebellion, or the conduct of the Sans-culottes in the French revolution; the enactments even of the British parliament against papists, or of Louis XIV. against the Huguenots, are features in the histories of France and England which would afford no guide in estimating the popular ideas of the present day, in those countries; or the actual civilization and feeling of their inhabitants. And yet many of the incidents related in the book alluded to date from a period either actually as remote, or comparatively as distant, if we consider the rapid growth of the diseased and hollow civilization of the Russian empire.

Besides such unmeaning anecdotes, it contains many others identical in form or substance with those given in the "Revelations;" but there is a third portion which are new, and apply to the living generation.

Though the author, or rather editor, of the Mystères, has been in Russia, his personal acquaintance with that country does not appear extensive;

and he professes in his preface to compile in a great measure from the notes and communications made to him by Poles and Russians. Many of his assertions are in fact subsequently repeated in Golovine, the last puplished of these works. It is not meant to be asserted that the instances or anecdotes cited in the "Mystères" are all true: to this infallibility no writer on that subject can pretend, but they are at least all current in the country of which they treat, and could naturally only have secured belief or popularity by their plausibility; or, in other words, by the experience which the Russian public has had of analogous occurrences.

If in England there were no free press, a fictitious account of the establishment of a railway branch, or of a steeple-chace, would find ready credence. So would an instance of Lynch law in the western states of the Union, if they could be supposed deprived of publicity; but a report of Lynch law execution, or of a steeple-chace, or of the progress of a railway, could never have gained ground in Prussia, because such things are either so unprecedented, or so unusual there, that only direct and undeniable evidence would suffice to confirm their existence.

The popular belief, in a despotic country, of an anecdote really fictitious, is therefore often far more

significant than would be its authentication if it were not generally disseminated. The latter, though true, might be an exceptional case; but the credibility accorded to the imaginary fact stamps it as illustrative of a widely recognised generality.

In this respect the "Mystères de Russie" are valuable; though, as the author of these pages had occasion to observe elsewhere, the nature of his compilation has inspired M. Lacroix, like many others, with a disgust so profound of everything Russian, that he involves the people and the government, the peasant, the official, and the noble, in a common reprobation, which both renders him unjust in his conclusions, and giving to his book the appearance of a mere diatribe, impairs the effect of the truths which it contains.

Thus, for instance, he cites one of the many versions of the popular story of the mother throwing her children to the wolves; and comments on it as a proof of the influence of an oppressive despotism in smothering even the natural affections of its victims. Nothing can be more erroneous: the strength of family ties being a marked and pleasing feature in the character of the Russian people.

Let us now turn to "Russia under Nicholas the First," by Ivan Golovine, one volume octavo, writ-

ten and published in Paris in the French language,* about the month of August 1845. The family of M. Golovine is one which has for generations filled the highest offices in the state. One of his ancestors was the lord high admiral of the navy created by Peter the Great; and in which that sovereign deigned, as an example to his nobles, to serve in an inferior capacity. The same individual, or one of his kinsmen, was the first Russian minister for foreign affairs. In the present generation, a General Golovine commanded in chief the Russian armies in the Caucasus; a Golovine was minister of public instruction. The author of "Russia under Nicholas the First" reminds us, in opening his book, that two hundred years ago, Thomas Golovine, one of his ancestors, had emigrated like himself; and when summoned by the usurper, Boris Godunof, to return, replied that he would do so when the three following Russian proverbs should have lost their point: "What is mine is the Tsars;"—"Next the Tsar, next the grave;" and "Dread not the judgment, but the judge."

His descendant in like circumstances refuses to re-enter the Tsar's dominions "till all Russians are promoted to the fourteenth class," [the fourteen

* "La Russie sous Nicholas premier, par Ivan Golovine," now translating into English under the title of "*Russia under the Autocrat.*"

classes of nobility being exempt from the infliction of the lash]; "till a Russian shall enjoy equal favour with a German; and till the pen shall have the same weight as steel in the social balance."

Ivan Golovine, whose family name would translate into English, *Head*, or *Headly*, had been, together with Prince Dolgorouki, (*Longarm* or *Longitharm*,) permitted to make some sojourn in Paris, where their literary ambition, however innocently manifesting itself, drew down the notice and displeasure of the imperial cabinet. Dolgorouki, under the pseudonyme of *Almagro*, had published a harmless account of the chief families in the Russian empire,—a sort of Muscovite Debrett or Burke, in a pamphlet form. Golovine was about to bring out a work on political economy, rather favourable than otherwise to the Russian government, and which on that condition he received permission to print from one of the chief Russian spies in Paris, the nominal correspondent in that city of the imperial minister of public instruction. But on the other hand, Golovine appears to have had an enemy in Count Nesselrode, the imperial minister for foreign affairs, from whose office he had formerly retired on account of some cutting observation on his handwriting made by that personage; hence he,

as well as Dolgorouki, was denounced to the emperor, who will not tolerate so dangerous a propensity as any tendency to writing, in his subjects; especially in the class to which these noblemen belonged, and whilst enjoying the favour of being allowed to reside abroad.

They were both in consequence peremptorily recalled. Young Dolgorouki obeyed, and was exiled for a year to Viatka, on the confines of Siberia; but Golovine was too wise to barter his personal independence for the retention of his rank or fortune; too wary to trust the honied words by which the chief of the secret police, and the minister for foreign affairs, sought to entice him back when their first menaces had failed. In the letter to Count Nesselrode, which terminates his correspondence with the Russian authorities on the subject, he winds up his final refusal to return with this ironical observation:—"I am forced to confess that I only quitted the service of my country to take those lessons in the art of calligraphy which your excellency pointed out as so necessary. I was without protectors, and of course it was not your place, Monsieur le Comte, under such circumstances, to remember that the first Russian minister of foreign affairs that ever existed bore the name I bear."

Having thus passed the rubicon, he wrote and published an account of the condition of his native country, under the Emperor Nicholas. In the true spirit of the Russian noble, he has striven rather to be witty than profound, rather to write gracefully than instructively; though his book, as it proceeds, evinces far more solid acquirements in its author than mere ease or brilliancy of style. Though liberal in his opinions, and bold in expressing them, he writes with natural pride of caste, and somewhat of the feeling of the feudal lord and proprietor tinges his exposition of the condition of the serf population. Not unfrequently too, in citing laws and regulations established to secure the rights and privileges of different classes, he forgets that he is addressing a western public, who cannot by any known analogy believe in such utter disregard of solemn enactments as reduces them to inutility—indeed to worse than inutility, because the letter of the law is there as a sort of cloak for the abuse.

Hence those laws and regulations which he cites to show the recognition of certain rights by the government, are apt to be mistaken by a French or English reader for a proof of their existence.

Such for instance is the law which exempts from

corporal punishment all individuals belonging to the fourteen classes ofnobility. But in reality, it only protects them habitually from the discretionary power of the police, to inflict such chastisement where and when they list. It is openly violated in two ways,—firstly in the punishment of cadets, secondly in all political cases, where it is used not only on the proof of offence, but to extort confession from the suspected. Now, inclusive of Poland, who will venture to say that half of those who have suffered during the last twenty years, in the empire, have not done so for offences of a political nature? Where not openly violated, it is evaded by making the presumed culprit a private soldier; this the emperor has the power to do to-morrow, by every one of his ministers and ambassadors, and not only is he not restrained by any law, from exercising such a stretch of power on personages of the highest rank, but not even by custom, nor by any want of precedent.

The hour that the man of proudest birth or rank in the empire is made a soldier, he may be flogged at the discretion of his serjeant, and his captain as frequently as he pleases may order the infliction of a hundred lashes.

Again, the law prohibiting the sale of the serf,

without the estate on which he is settled, or the separation of families, becomes by the facility and frequency of its evasion, as has been shown elsewhere, a mere dead letter.

On the whole, the book of this high-born and patriotic Russian affords striking corroboration of the picture drawn in the "Revelations of Russia," of the condition of that empire. He bears unflinching testimony to the incredible extent of the corruption and demoralizing influence of that government, which the writer of these volumes has denounced. Of the governors of provinces, he says, (page 369,) "They do not possess more disinterestedness or integrity than other Russian functionaries, but they are quite as ignorant and heedless. It would be too voluminous a task to cite the innumerable and unheard-of instances which might be brought before the reader of their malversations; and as it is impossible to denounce them all, it would not be just to call down punishment on some, whilst sparing others. Let it suffice to instance, that, one borrows money of those to whom he can be useful, never to return it; another causes his household to be served gratis, by tradesmen whom he tacitly authorises in return to sell adulterated articles; that a third

receives bribes from the farmers of the brandy monopoly, to allow them to add water to their spirits; that a fourth causes government contracts to be adjudged to himself at undue prices; that a fifth employs the crown peasants to construct a road to an estate which he has purchased with money extorted from heretics, as the price of the enlargement of their incarcerated chief. These are not isolated facts, which apply to only a few of these governors, but the greatest number of them are guilty of such or similar extortion."

Of the senators,—a body gathered from all the most venerable illustrations, civil and military, of the state,—he says, "that though they are not proof against bribes offered with more or less tact, still, on the principle that one individual is more easy to corrupt than a whole body, that they are less easily bought over than the imperial procurators, "who in reality in Russia, in the senate as well as in the governments (provinces), are the sole dispensers of justice."

Of the subordinates, he adds: "The governors are worthily seconded by the various agents and officials under their control. Equally divested of principle and of instruction, there are no abuses or malversations into which money will not tempt

them." And elsewhere (page 114): "The dishonesty of the officials in Russia surpasses all that can be imagined. All public officers, high and low, rob openly, and with impunity, from the ammunition and stores of the soldiers, down to the medicine in the hospitals."

In some part of the "Revelations of Russia," an account is given of a den of murder discovered in a watch-box of the St. Petersburg police, situated in the very centre of the most crowded street in the city. Golovine says (page 196) that Mr. H. having related this fact in a letter imprudently sent through the post, was taken out of his bed from the side of his pregnant wife, who in consequence miscarried, and that he was subsequently kept three years in exile.

Jakovlef (introduced to the reader in the "Revelations"), according to Golovine, loses £4000 at play, and is by the paternal care of the secret police ordered to be exiled to Viatka. This order "was only revoked because his father made a donation of £4000 to the public charities; which, in strange derision, are presided over by the chief of the secret police—a police which cannot be equalled in China or Japan, and which may be considered as the most maleficent of institutions."

He relates that Mr. Koukolnik having written a drama, entitled "The Hand of the Most Highest," which met with the approbation of Nicholas, a Mr. Polevoi ventured to find fault with it, and was in consequence seized in Moscow, torn from the bosom of his family, and hurried in custody of a gendarme in a cart without springs to St. Petersburg; being cured by the fright and the jolting for ever of his liberalism. How would those critics, who still find semi-apologies for the Russian emperor, like to exercise their craft under such patronage?

But "*The Mystères de Russie*," chiefly a compilation from the notes of Russians, and the book of Golovine—who has boldly and in his own name stepped forward to unmask his government, —both paint the condition of the country in more sombre colours than even the author of these pages has done. The character which he has given of Nicholas—towards whom he has been accused of bearing invidious animosity—appears amiable and bright beside their portraiture of that sovereign.

Not only do both the "Mystères de Russie" and Golovine draw a darker picture of his vices, but they deny in a great measure such moral qualities attributed to him as tended to elevate his character, if not to render it more amiable.

in question the personal courage of a man whom he had seen effeminately timid at some explosive experiments, and nervously alarmed at the skittishness of a very harmless charger;—a man, who, with a passion for everything warlike amounting almost to mania, behaved with incontestible want of courage in the Turkish campaign, and never afterwards adventured his person on the battle-fields of Poland or the Caucasus, where he has sent, and sends, his soldiers to perish with such reckless disregard of human life;—a man, who, on the memorable revolt which marked his accession to the throne, retired out of shot when a fire was opened on the rebels. The trustworthy informant of the author respecting this fact was an Englishman, who, passing at the time, and prompted only by curiosity, had stood in the midst of the fire; whilst the sovereign whose crown depended on the issue, backed by thirteen thousand men, was ordering twelve pieces of cannon to play upon eleven hundred revolters; and retiring out of reach of the musketry with which they might have retaliated. Still a degree of moral courage, and of promptitude in action, was attributed to him by the author, which not ohly both these works, but many

other authorities, unhesitatingly deny; and if they cannot gainsay the eventual energy with which he acted, they at least establish that he only assumed it after having passed through a transition state of terror and irresolution which lasted many hours. Golovine relates, too, the anecdote given in the "Revelations," of the address made by Nicholas to the infuriated multitude during the cholera, when he ordered them to fall upon their knees, and was obeyed; but he subjoins a fact of which the author was not aware, which changes altogether the complexion of this trait, which is, that the market-place was first surrounded by the military.

A perusal of these works will prove that he has estimated with comparative indulgence the character and conduct of this powerful sovereign, and painted without exaggeration the general condition of his empire,—as a few extracts will show when returning to a subject to which the author recurs,—instead of leaving undisturbed, facts of which he was then ignorant, or of which he then forbore the use, because the harshness of the autocrat's disposition, and the merciless cruelty with which he seeks to bear down all opposition to his will, have undergone none of that modification which it is to be hoped will, through the future, be insured by the conscious-

ness that the civilized world has its eyes upon his conduct, and that his acts must now continue to obtain publicity through the intermedium of channels which it is beyond his power to stop.

The author has shown elsewhere what the state of the Russian empire was a few years since, and he has called the attention of the reader to the corroboration which all cotemporary and subsequent writers furnish of the correctness of his statements. In these volumes he has pointed out what is the condition of the Polish provinces up to the present hour; but lest it may be supposed that Poland offers an unhappy exception, and that since then things may have progressed in Russia Proper, he is now about to cite some anecdotes dating within the present, none later than the close of the past year, whilst scarce six months have elapsed since the occurrence of some, and nearly all took place in St. Petersburg beneath its imperial master's eye.

And to whom must we attach the blame of this state of things, which like a poisonous fungus grows in rankness and extent; and what is not this extent, if the reader only admits one tithe of the converging evidence now pouring in upon this subject?—Not to ministers who notoriously do not govern; not to the noble, who would gladly enfran-

chise his slave in exchange for his own freedom; not to the official reared in the vices of a hideous system, and whom its overturn would reduce to beggary; not assuredly to the passive and enduring serf, whom all these three powers oppress.

It would be equally unjust to saddle the whole blame on the emperor, or to hold him responsible for the evil which he found existing; but on his head, and his alone, must justice visit its continuance, and increase. Who but he has the power to destroy its existence or to stay its augmentation; and what class, what public body, what individual, however energetic, would be allowed to make one step towards social progress in the empire of a sovereign so jealous of his power? If, therefore, only as the obstacle to all improvement, it is impossible to treat of his empire, and to spare him personally. He is not a mere passive obstacle—not a mere indolent and apathetic prince. One tithe of the exertions lavished on details worthy of the army tailor and drill sergeant, — one tithe of the activity wasted in scampering about high-roads,—one hundredth part of the suffering caused in his empire to uphold the terrors of his name, would have sufficed in some degree to root out from it the corruption and demo-

ralization which more than ever thrive, extend, and flourish. But if neglecting a sacred trust as the autocrat of so many millions, he is responsible for not having done that on which their happiness depends, and which none but himself could do, who but he is answerable for the decimation of Poland,—for his treatment of the Jews,—and for that sanguinary religious persecution still ringing in the ears of Europe? Let us admit that he had no cognizance of the revolting details of individual cases, is it to be believed that the monarch who signs the sentence of every soldier sentenced by court-martial to be flogged, is ignorant of the cruelties involved in a persecution comprising millions of his subjects,—that he has signed hundreds of orders for the perpetual banishment, or for the infliction of the knout or plitt on religious recusants, without being aware of the consequences of that signature? Common sense dictates the contrary; and knowing this, to spare the man who is at this moment the government of Russia, would be, not a courteous forbearance, but a pusillanimous injustice.

CHAPTER II.

Erroneous notions entertained in France and England respecting the Russian Government—The Private Character of the Emperor Nicholas, and his Personal Responsibility—The late Count Benkendorf—Orloff—Kakoshkine—Perowski.

The Russian despotism, and the despot representing it, long found warm apologists with certain parties and classes in France and England, and may still possess some of their lingering sympathies.

But these have arisen from mistaking the character of the Russian empire, and the nature of the system which he personifies; for the age is long past when either would find advocates, if known in their reality.

The friendship of the powerful is always attractive, and the Russian sovereigns have long been powerful,—none more so than the present. The character they assumed in the eyes of the world beyond their empire, has always been many-sided, and might be compared to those diamond-cut reflectors, presenting various faces, in which every

shade of opinion might see something of their ideas or prejudices mirrored.

In France, that school of philosophy which succeeded the Voltarian, like the founder of the latter, applauded the falsely asserted religious toleration whose origin seemed scepticism and indifference. The Legitimatist party, with all the aristocratic and exclusive notions mixed up with its loyalty, saw in the Tsar the unshaken champion of that legitimacy everywhere else overturned or tottering.

The Buonapartists were dazzled by the similitude in form and extent of the imperial rule of Russia, with that which still lived in their enthusiastic memories; and the marriage of a daughter of Nicholas with a Beauharnais still further captivating their imagination, seemed a connecting link between the long inhumed despotism they were regretting, and the inglorious and far more desolating system which they were learning to regard with complacency.

The Republican party could contemplate without much disgust a form of government which levels beneath the Tsar's imperial chariot wheels, those irregularities of birth and fortune, which obstinately surviving in western countries, so profoundly irritate its partisans. They saw the principle in

practice, of men without other importance in the state than that which it ephemerally conferred upon them,—the meanest raised up from the dust, and the highest humbled in it. It is true that all this is effected in Russia by one individual will, which représents the state; but in their estimation, it is at worst many obstacles reduced to unity. The Chinese centralisation of the empire, and the imperious power of the ukase, remind them only of the energetic days of the Republic; and then for them, as for most other Frenchmen, the panoply of war—the camp-like aspect—the tremendous array of bayonets and battalions—thrown into the balance, had long blinded them and made them deaf to all that could have shocked, in the condition of the Tsar's dominions.

In England, the exaggerated language in which political grievances are habitually set forth, led many to disbelieve the accounts which occasionally reached them; and these accounts, few and far between, from avowed enemies, were unaccompanied by any of the testimony which would have been deemed necessary to support charges far less monstrous. Nearly all acquaintance with that country was derived from mercantile men, anxious to suppress all discussion which might irritate a

despotic government, on whose good will they are to a great extent dependent; or else from diplomatists, less well-informed, and equally discreet. All documentary evidence which came to hand upon the subject, consisted of ukases, framed for the purpose of misleading public opinion, which when most oppressive in spirit and cruel in effects, are couched in terms so fair and deceptive as to remind one of the medal already described to the reader, on which the Emperor Nicholas has recorded the forcible reunion, with all its sanguinary episodes, of the Basilians to the Greek church, by the motto "Reunited by love."

Hence, very unjustly, rather the people than the government was generally unpopular in England. From our constitutional habit of regarding our own powerless sovereigns as irresponsible, all blame was especially averted from its imperial head, whilst credit was inconsistently given him for all that seemed fair and favourable.

The general persuasion seemed to be, that the Russian emperors were using means, harsh and arbitrary in themselves, but perhaps solely fitted to redeem their people from barbarism and degradation.

The high Tories saw in the Tsar an incarna-

tion of the Church and State principle. Like the French Legitimatists, and in common with all other Conservatives, they were once disposed to regard him as the most uncompromising and successful upholder of the rights of all privileged classes from sovereigns downwards—the foe of dangerous innovation and of revolutions, and the powerful conservator of peace in Europe.

It would be difficult to calculate how far the public opinion of the West had further been influenced by the enormous sums so judiciously spent by the Russian cabinet to secure its favour, or to modify it; or by the diamond rings, snuff-boxes, orders, or presents in money profusely distributed to strangers by a sovereign who taxes so oppressively his subjects, and pays his servants in a manner so niggardly that they are forced to rob to avoid starvation.

Those sudden visits by which Nicholas has astonished, not his generals in the Polish campaign, nor his Caucasian armies, but the late King of Sweden, the court of St. James's, or the bewildered old pontiff and his cardinals—have not been without some effect. Men are prepossessed in favour of the assurance that looks so like innocence, —by the person and the urbanity of a sovereign who

neglects none of those acts of seduction which it is to be regretted he does not with his own subjects substitute for imperious violence, and which exercise a far more potent influence even over those who consider themselves far above it, than they are willing to allow, or even conscious of. When Lord Durham went to St. Petersburg, bearing, or supposed to bear with him the option of peace or war, the man whom all the wealth of the Siberian mines could not have tempted, and who would have looked with scorn on any dignities or distinctions in the power of a Russian Tsar to bestow, was nevertheless easily won over by the respectful civilities of the potentate, who waving all the ceremonial of courts, and breaking through the trammels of time-honoured etiquette, waited on the ambassador in his own house, and introducing himself, gave him hospitable welcome.

The Tsar and his predecessors have had so much experience of the existence of a price for all men, and of the transparent devices by which they may be duped by those possessed of power, that it has no doubt led them to the conclusion that parties and nations may be influenced in the same manner. Thus, to conciliate the favour of the English people,—to whom, with their manners, customs, usages, and

opinions, he bears as great an antipathy as a people, as to the reigning family of France as a government, —he first signs a treaty for the suppression of the slavetrade, and then gives a racing cup to its sporting public. Not a little tact was shown in these allurements. They have been insufficient permanently to influence the public, because since that period its sources of knowledge respecting his real conduct are twenty-fold increased; but who will deny the effect of these two measures;—and is it not enough to call a blush to the cheek of an Englishman, to reflect what it would have been but for counteracting causes?

In England, where the conduct of a minister, of a party leader, a magistrate, trustee or vestryman, is made the subject of such virulent declamation, royalty is usually respected; and this is just because we have made it irresponsible, as it is practically impotent. But this feeling, as a people, we are apt falsely to extend to responsible sovereigns, and we are far too courteously satisfied and duped by any outward pretences which in our own would be reasonably sufficient as indicating an acknowledgment of that popular will, which known, they are never ill advised enough to brave.

Thus many abolitionists, contrasting the readiness

of Nicholas to sign the treaty, with the querulous spirit of the French opposition, and the shuffling of the cabinets of Madrid, Lisbon, and the Brazils, judged him to be animated by their own sentiments. The sporting men of England concluded this monarch to be, instead of a gloomy military tyrant, on the contrary, a man sympathising with them—a fine fellow after all.

And yet this imperial personage, subscribing so ostentatiously to a treaty for the suppression of the trade in human flesh, is not only a slave-holder, but possesses more slaves than all the planters of the southern states of the Union, of the French and Spanish colonies, and of the Brazils put together. Not only does he withhold that one dash of his pen which would emancipate them without interfering with any private interest, but not contented with the vast inheritance of bondsmen which has devloved upon him, he is perpetually adding to their number.

Uninterruptedly since the commencement of his reign, when he signed the above-named treaty,—whilst he was enjoying the hospitality of Great Britain, and up to the present time, the newspapers published in St. Petersburg, his seat of residence, weekly advertise a description of stray slaves—as

we do in England of dogs without owners ;—and these slaves, when unclaimed, pass into the private domain of the emperor.

This founder of a racing cup in England, is a man who profoundly despises British sports. In 1841, at the races of St. Petersburg, some taste for the turf seemed awakening amongst the Russians. A Prince Bariatinski rode in a hurdle race, and had a severe fall ; and the heir apparent, fired with emulation, took part in a sweepstakes for gentlemen riders. His imperial highness rode a horse of enormous price, which he had been assured was unrivalled in speed, but which, whatever might have been its natural swiftness, had been reduced by the severity of the riding-school to a sort of rocking-horse canter. The youth, who left his horse's rein quite loose, appeared lost in wonder at finding himself left half-a-mile behind by several of his competitors. The emperor was absent at the time, but on his return he severely reprimanded his son, and placed several of the officers under arrest, "for *making grooms and lacqueys of themselves like Englishmen.*"

The only field sport in which he ever indulges, is shooting in the gardens of Peterhoff. The game is not even preserved here. It is caught, and let

loose by men concealed in the bushes. Even wild ducks are pegged down on the surface of the water, and loosed when the *sportsman* approaches by means of a sort of trigger pulled by a string. Of a certain diplomatist known in England as a crack rider, and who represented at St. Petersburg the court of St. James's, he is said to have observed contemptuously when speaking of his own servant Matutsewicz,—the only foreigner perhaps who ever shone in the hunting-field,—that they had "*des gouts d'écurie.*" Is it therefore to be presumed that any sympathy or fellow-feeling prompted him to contribute to the amusement of the sporting community of England? or was his gift of a perpetual plate inspired by the belief that all men of all classes in all countries have their price, and that the sporting men of England, with an imperial prize before their eyes, would be induced to turn a deaf ear to all the complaints of his victims?

It would be difficult to conceive a more noble, and the author believes popular, use of the success of a triumphant candidate, than the chivalrous restoration to the Polish emigrants, by the winner, of this stake, given by a foreign tyrant, who at the lowest computation has confiscated private property in their native country to the amount of 50 millions sterling.

All, indeed, of those classes in France and England which have been cited as prone to view in the interests of the autocrat, some reflection of their own, are as much deceived as the abolitionists and sportsmen of Great Britain, in their estimation of the nature, spirit, and tendencies of the Russian despotism. Betwixt that spirit and the opinions of the most widely antithetic parties in Western Europe, there exists not on close examination, the faintest analogy. All the vegetation of our temperate climes, from the towering oak down to the humble daisy, does not differ more essentially from the rank produce of a tropical swamp.

There exist no feelings, views, or opinions in common, between any of the political, religious, or social sects or parties of civilized countries, with the Russian despotism. To comprehend its tendency, it is idle to scrutinise the history of progression in the West, since the Greeks emerging from barbarism centuries ago, transmitted to us the undying heritage of their intellectual acquisitions. We must, on the contrary, turn to the populous despotisms of the East, which have left in Egypt and Assyria little more intellectual traces than abandoned ant-hills,—suggesting only multiplicity of life, but nothing of its elevating principle. It is from such empires

as the Mongolian, which have left no record but an immense amount of human suffering,—no monuments excepting piles of skulls;—it is from the contemplation of an existing state like China, where the fiercer passions of mankind are curbed and quelled to give full scope to its meaner propensities, and where society has remained in the stagnation to which it had been tens of centuries ago reduced,—that we must learn to find the inspiring thought, and to read the desolating moral of the Russian policy.

Such portions of the arts, sciences, and organisation of civilized lands as tend to multiply its physical strength it covets,—as in all parts of the world the savage has eagerly laid aside his bow and sling to adopt the firelock of the European;—but in all besides it strives to instil the abject submission, the superstitious dread of power, and the unreflecting materialism of the Asiatic, into the minds and bosoms of its subjects.

It has no feeling in common with those who uphold the union of the church and state,—for to the Russian autocracy the church must be a submissive handmaiden, a blind and undiscriminating tool,—a means to reach men through their consciences, when prolonged endurance has produced insensibi-

lity to the terrors of this world. To that western loyalty which, whether assuming the form of Legitimatism in France, or Toryism in England, identifies with the rights of kings, the rights and privileges of aristocracy, the Russian despotism is profoundly inimical. It has long struggled with, it has only recently crushed, perhaps it still dreads, and undoubtedly it profoundly hates everything approaching to aristocracy. It hates essentially even its best feature, the chivalric feeling which it has perpetuated; because this gives rise to prejudices, and involves duties which render men unpliant to the sovereign will. Everything of what we should call gentlemanlike feeling is sedulously discouraged, trodden down, and rooted out. All men are taught to cringe to the basest and vilest on whom the light of imperial favour shines,—to shun and execrate the worthy on whom its displeasure darkens. The man of the nicest honour must fraternise with the felon, pardoned and favoured by his sovereign; and he must submit to any indignity from him if that sovereign makes him his superior. All considerations of family honour, personal feeling, or self-dignity must disappear before the incessant dictates of a blind and unmurmuring obedience.

Every shade of conservatism in the West is

radically based on the principle of consolidating the right of those professing it, by supporting and respecting in their turn, the rights of others. But in the spirit of the Russian despotism it is utterly inadmissible, because no other rights whatever are compatible with its own.

As regards those liberals who view with complacency the strength of arm which has esentially levelled all social distinctions, they would find on more narrow investigation, that this effect is a step towards the antipodes of that democratic equality which they covet. The jealous—perhaps envious—level above which a democracy will not see any of its elements permanently elevated, has no doubt its faults and dangers, as well as its advantages; but it bears no analogy to such a process in the East, where, being the result not of the will of the majority, but of the action of one dreaded individual, it has a tendency to generate more abject and hopeless submissiveness, by exaggerating the stature of the oppressing power, between whose excessive altitude and the profound abasement of the people, no steps intervene to break the abruptness of the contrast. Despotism, therefore, far from having done their work, by leaving only necessary the substitution of popular, for auto-

cratic power, has paved the way for military dictatorship, instead of sowing the seeds of an equality, ready to spring up in a common and inextricable growth, with liberty, whenever it should take root. Even the partisans of that most inconceivable of all political hallucinations, now so rapidly disappearing,—the French Buonapartists,—are deceived by analogies quite as imaginary. The Russian despotism does not offer a bloody lottery, from which generals' scarfs and marshals' batons were the prizes destined to reward the stake of skill and daring.

The spirit of the martinet, the jealousy of a suspicious government, and the intrigues inseparable from its profound corruption, award its gains to the most ignoble objects.

It is Napoleon's military system rendered irksome by intolerable restraint, and divested of its splendid chances for the fortunate and brave, of its glory for the enthusiastic.

Though the public opinion of constitutional countries, which set strongly against the Russian despotism for several years after the Polish revolution, then for a considerable period subsided into indifference,—still it has gradually, but undeniably within the last two years, been awakening

to reprobation of its oppression, and to interest in the fate of its victims. The strong expression of public feeling has recently caused even the autocrat to pause in the prosecution of his violence, and through the future there is little cause to doubt that the strong enunciation of popular sympathy with the suffering millions of Eastern Europe, will in many more effectual ways tend to the amelioration of their condition. It is not, therefore, as some affect to believe, a sentiment as idle when inspired, as commiseration with beings in another planet. No, there is scarce a book, a newspaper paragraph, or public speech expressive of this feeling in the West, which does not within the last few years,—and it might almost have been said months,—find its way into those parts of Eastern Europe, to which it is the object of these volumes to call attention; inspiring their most influential inhabitants with present fortitude, because with high resolves and hope for the future.

But it is equally undeniable that this indifference in the West has yielded only two concurring causes,—the concentrated exertions of several individuals in dragging, as it were, this subject into notice, and the rash and violent conduct into

which the impetuosity of the emperor's character has hurried him. It is equally undeniable that three other causes have concurred to awaken the reprobation thus drawn forth upon his conduct: *viz.*, the tendency of various parties to view him somewhat in the light of a fellow partisan; the erroneous notions entertained regarding his private character; and the constitutional habit, to which allusion has been made, of passing over with deferential disapprobation the actions of sovereigns, to vent the public wrath on their responsible advisers.

This is indeed a legitimate excuse for passing lightly over the derelictions of princes, whilst visiting with severity the bad conduct of all other authorities; but if applied to a Russian autocrat, to screen him from deserved opprobrium, the greatest aggregate amount perhaps of human wrong which man has ever inflicted on his fellow man, might pass uncensured and unpunished. If courtesy make him irresponsible, and seek individually to defend him, the evil must endure unstigmatised; for if he be sheltered, there are none who can be held responsible, or on whom the blame can be affixed.

That constitutional deference the author of these volumes can comprehend, approve, and prac-

tise ; but if all the wrath of the press,—if all the vituperative eloquence of the senate is to be poured forth to brand the tyranny of individuals, from the governor-general of India to the workhouse official, —from Warren Hastings to the master of the Andover union,—he confesses that he can see but one motive left for any forbearance towards a despot, who, according to the evidence of his own ukases, has been guilty of cruelty and oppression a thousand-fold greater than any they were accused of ; and this is a motive which he thinks no Englishman would avow,—that of the wealth, power, and exalted station of the imperial culprit.

Nicholas, as the individual, has neither been the founder of the Russian despotism, nor will it die with him. He has merely increased its intensity,—firstly, because ambitious of dominion, his passions all tend towards that one object ; and secondly, because he was placed in a peculiar position, in which the most moderate capacity with fixity of purpose might readily attain it. All the efforts and combinations of preceding reigns had smoothed the way for him, so that he might on his accession to the throne be compared to the inheritor of those colossal fortunes resulting from the accumulated savings of many preceding gene-

rations. This inheritance, if no tempest rise from without to destroy and overwhelm it, he will transmit to his successor. Therefore, as it is against the system rather than the man that the hostility of humanity should be directed, the author would have been sedulous to abstract the autocratic from the private, and even from the individual, character of the Russian emperor; but when the actions of the autocrat are excused, palliated, or doubted, on account of the presumed excellence of the individual, then the emperor owes to the unskilful or ignorant zeal of his apologists any discussion trenching upon ground which would have been respected if the feelings of the man or the emperor could have been put in competition with the truth, upon so grave a subject.

Until within the last two years, those whom this powerful despot chose to persecute were so profoundly wretched that they could not even find defenders. The press was either silent, or only heaped on the autocrat its adulation, which, if not entirely believed, at least served to neutralise the effect of all injurious rumours. We have even seen Alexander Dumas, the ungrateful protegé of Louis Philippe, and the ultra-liberal in his writ-

ings, guilty, as regards the Emperor Nicholas, of the basest of all flattery, that which transforms a man's vices into the opposite virtues. There is a certain historical novel by this author, entitled the "*Maître d'armes*," in which the conspiracy of 1825 is historically introduced, and Nicholas made to play the part of the benevolent sovereign in the "*Receuil des Anecdotes Choisiés*," towards Ivaschef, a youthful participator in the conspiracy of 1825; against whom very little was proved, and who was exiled to Siberia. The clemency really displayed by the emperor towards this individual, consisted in his allowing the French companion of his mother, who had conceived a romantic affection for him when high and happy, to join him when a Siberian felon, on condition of her becoming his wife. To have refused the boon would have been contrary to the common regulation respecting convicts, formed for the purpose of peopling as rapidly as possible the Siberian solitudes. It may be pardonable, though it must be in questionable taste, for a writer to invent traits of generosity and grandeur wholly fictitious, attributing them to a public man, even in illustration of any known characteristic; but what would be said of an author devising a

wholly imaginary incident, and mixing it up with the narration of historic truths, to prove the cowardice of Charles XII., the liberality of Louis XI., the purity of Louis XV.'s morals, or the sensibility of Murat? Harshness, and an extreme vindictiveness, are the most salient traits in the disposition of Nicholas, and he has seldom given way to them with less reserve than on the occasion in which Dumas assigns to him a part so amiable. The emperor forgave no one; that is to say, that he sent all the condemned into perpetual exile, or exile of best part of their lives; excepting five, whom he hanged,—not because the most guilty, but because the most heroic of the conspirators.

Seven months intervened between the capture and execution of the rebels, and meanwhile he personally interrogated the nearest and dearest relatives of the accused, remaining deaf to all their appeals to his mercy. Such was his conduct on that particular occasion which Monsieur Dumas has chosen as a peg on which to hang this fictitious episode of imperial clemency. Twenty years have elapsed since then, and he still continues inexorably to keep those exiles in their banishment whose term of punishment has not expired.

During twenty years he remained, and remains unmoved, to all the prayers of the Princess Troubetskoi, and of the ladies Narishkin and Rosen, who chose to share the exile of their husbands. This mercilessness is not the result of temporary irritation, it is habitual to the character of Nicholas, and it usually exceeds even that of his subordinates.

He never alters sentences passed on those condemned by civil or military tribunals, but to add to their cruelty.

Such was the case with the cadet Anguel, the son of a Saxon nobleman, whom in a fit of malignant jealousy his captain had caused to be flogged. Anguel, when he left the service, called him out. For this he was tried by court-martial, and condemned to run the gauntlet twice through two squadrons. The emperor, in confirming his sentence, added to it,—*thrice through four squadrons.**

A grenadier having threatened to kill his captain, was condemned to the same punishment;—the emperor added with his own hand, that he should receive a certain nnmber of the blows upon the head.* Prince Sanguschko having been condemned to exile in Siberia for participation in the Polish revolution, the emperor added that he should per-

* Golovine and Lacroix.

form the journey on foot. Madame Grascholk having been with her son to visit her husband, an emigrant in Switzerland, the child refused to quit its father, and the mother had the imprudence to return to Russia. She was tried, and condemned to Siberia. The nobility of Podolia subscribed for her the sum of 14,000 roubles (about £600); by order of Nicholas, 13,000 were confiscated for the benefit of his invalid corps.

"Even as grand-duke," says Golovine, "Nicholas, then chief of the engineer department, in signing the order to punish one of his soldiers, augmented the number of the strokes he was to receive. It was only on the representation of his aid-de-camp, M. P***, that already the sentence of the culprit was so severe that he could not possibly outlive it, that he desisted. What most shocked the aid-de-camp, however, was the indifference with which he talked over the affair: Nero even had wept in signing a death-warrant."

But if in his habitual character Nicholas, who never loses an opportunity of presiding military executions in person, is merciless and vindictive, a few exceptions mark his conduct; but only towards those who, high or low, have given evidence of

their baseness. That predilection which some of the Bourbons have entertained for the occupation of cooking—some of the house of Brandenburg for tailoring, seems to attract his sympathies towards all whose actions stamp them as the vermin of society; and in favour of these people only does his inexorable severity thaw into clemency.

The instance of Sherwood, presently to be cited; and amongst his favourites, those hereafter mentioned, of Klein-Michel detected in a falsehood,—Kakoshkine, in his dishonest practices, and pardoned, where so many others for comparative trifles have been disgraced—afford a specimen of this propensity.

The pardon and re-installation of the police-major mentioned in the "Revelations of Russia" as convicted of having plundered a guest at the London Hotel in St. Petersburg, whom he was further suspected of having murdered, but who being related to the wife of Kakoshkine, grand-master of the police, could only have led to the conclusion that this connivance of the sovereign with the infamy of his servants was the result of a necessity entailed by his position—the necessity of attaching to him at any price unscrupulous tools, in the immediate interest of self-preservation; but what are

we to say when we find this man, so relentless to all appeals to his mercy from the high-minded, the devoted, and the innocent, granting his free pardon, as he has done recently in the autumn of 1844, to Michael Nowak, a Pole, who having been refused relief by the Polish committee because convicted of felony, had assaulted Lord Dudley Stuart, its vice-president !

There is an unnatural Polish mother who in a fit of terror at the awful penalties incurred by those who harbour deserters, called in the Russian authorities, and gave up to them her own son, when he scared her by returning harassed and foot-sore to take refuge in her cottage. On this woman Nicholas has conferred a cross and pension, though he did not remit the sentence of her son, a sentence which was tantamount to death.

A Russian senator, after the outbreak of the rebellion of 1825, brought his own nephew, to deliver him up to the emperor; the emperor conferred an order, and lavished his subsequent favours on him, but sent his relative to Siberia.

Was it not obvious, that in these cases, the mother and uncle, if acting through want of feeling, or under the influence of terror, were unworthy of reward ?—if through exalted loyalty, at least deserving of the pardon of their relatives ?

Count Orloff is said to owe no small share of the favour he enjoys, to his having betrayed the plans of his associates in Pestel's conspiracy, from which he seceded with Momonoff and Van Wiesen. At least this sort of treachery appears a ready road to the imperial favour, if we may judge by the example of a certain Sherwood, whom we blush to record as of English name or descent, on whom the title of *Vernoi*, or "faithful," was bestowed as a reward for his treachery, for having in 1824, being then a non-commissioned officer, betrayed the plans of the secret association to which he was bound by solemn oath; a service rendered directly to Alexander, but which his successor hastened to acknowledge on his accession to the throne, by appending to his name an epithet which would have appeared a cruel imperial pleasantry, if Nicholas had not conferred on him more solid marks of his munificence and gratitude; amongst which that of a donation of money, and repeated promotion, which did not prevent his being turned out of his regiment in disgrace; and lastly, by relieving him from a criminal prosecution no later than the year before last, when imprisoned for forgery in the *Ouprava* of St. Petersburg. The watchmaker Frankenthal, who

betrayed Konarski, was made a noble, and invested with an order by the emperor.

It has happened to the author to hear several times the following arguments used in England by those who have risen, filled with horror, from the perusal of such works as have recently thrown light on the condition of the Russian empire:—"There must be great exaggeration. If otherwise, we can never believe that the emperor Nicholas—so good a father, and so irreproachable a moral character—can participate in such a state of things."

The moral character of sovereigns, like that of all public men, so that it afford no glaring or scandalous example, is a matter with which the public have no right to interfere. History has shown us over and over again that feeble, or wicked princes have been the best of parents and of husbands; and that sovereigns, whose private character has been most questionable, have proved admirable rulers.

The author, therefore, will not attempt to raise the veil which covers any private weakness of the man, even though made to hide the vices of a hideous system, excepting where the illegitimate exercise of his arbitrary authority has rendered these transgressions political crimes towards society.

No man living has a right to drag into publicity the amours of a contemporary prince, who does not publish them; and even where, as with Louis XIV., they were ostentatiously paraded in view of the whole nation, a writer might have passed over in silence such episodes of the monarch's life as his connection with Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and Madame de Maintenon, whilst duty would have called upon him to brand with reprobation the monstrous abuse of kingly authority, by the sovereign who threatened the outraged husband of Madame de Montespan, and lastly punished his importunities.

Let us, therefore, when we hear the morality of conduct of the Emperor Nicholas held up in the West as a political argument so decisive, investigate in the spirit above alluded to, the public rumour of St. Petersburg upon the subject. Certain anecdotes are prevalent in that capital, amongst them the two following, of which, as of everything else connected with such a despotism, proofs are of course impossible, but which cannot be given here as universally diffused and accredited in Russian society without inquiry being made into the prevalence of the report, and the general belief conceded to it. The authenticity of one of these anecdotes (men-

tioned in the "Revelations of Russia,") was confirmed to the author by the near relative of a party implicated.

It is briefly as follows: An aide-de-camp of the emperor's, at his master's request, married one of the maids of honour, endowed with a large marriage portion by his imperial majesty. The aide-de-camp immediately after his marriage refused to live any longer with his wife. The wife was retained at court, the husband sent off to the Caucasus, and made up to this hour to serve in a distant part of the empire. This circumstance happened some years ago.

The following, selected amongst many similar stories, like the preceding, on account of the tyrannic feature which brings it legitimately within the domain of public discussion, is of recent occurrence. It formed last winter a theme of common conversation amongst the Russians resident in Paris, all loyal subjects,—whose presence in that capital is a striking mark of the favour of their government.

"A personage of some note," runs the story, which gives dates, names, and locality, "returning unexpectedly, met an officer in his wife's apartment. Heated with wine, or maddened by jealousy, or

more probably," observes the narrator, "not recognizing at once the imperial intruder, he seized him by the collar, exclaiming, *padletz*! (scoundrel.) The next day he was removed by the secret police, whether to Siberia or a distant government report is not agreed, but at any rate, he had not been restored to liberty."

The advance of age, and the cares of government, have seldom the effect of rendering those who rule less irritable, and all the Romanoffs (or as they might more properly be termed, the Holstein Gottorps,) become more arbitrary or moody with increasing years. Some of the favourites of the Emperor Nicholas have been removed, either by death or the disfavour of their sovereign, from his councils; but those who have succeeded them, are mostly men who have the reputation of being tools more servile, or agents more violent of the imperial will.

Old Count Benkendorf, the grand-master of the secret police, and once his *locum tenens*,—an honest man as the world of Russia goes,—has been sometime dead. Whilst still living, the grand-master was cited in the "Revelations of Russia," by the author, as one of the least contemptible of the higher officials of the empire. Golovine repeats

the assertion made therein, "that everybody was agreed that in the exercise of his disgraceful functions, (as grand-master of the secret police,) he has done as little harm as possible." But even of this man he says,—"He did not disdain presents, if adroitly made. A certain emerald necklace earned for Mr. L. the ribbon of St. Stanislas; there are certain diamonds to which Mr. B. owes the recognition of his title of count, of which the validity was called in question." Nevertheless, the comparative inaccessibility of Benkendorf to bribes placed *him* in so favourable a light by contrast with other personages in power, that he decidedly bore a high character, even though known to be the unscrupulous agent both of political enormities and of private transactions, which, in the civilised portions of Europe, would not only have excluded him from the company of gentlemen, but have placed him beyond the pale of that very comprehensive circle designated respectable society. Such blemishes in his character could naturally little affect his reputation in a country where public rumour attributes to three fourths of the other great officers of state the prevalent vice of their class,—to which it is with regret that even allusion is made in these pages, and which the criminal law of England punishes with death.

Sometime before his death he met with a mishap of which it is said that he never recovered the chagrin. The old vizier had a well-known foible, by which a French actress profited so well as to extract from him certain papers.

This powerful favourite, whose office made him the arch-spy for the centre of a vast and cumbrous system, for whose guidance legions of sub-delegated spies daily betrayed the trusts of nature and of friendship, to keep him advised of all that passed in every circle throughout the empire, and in every court of Europe,—this man, at whose name all men trembled, little suspected that there was a certain colonel in his office, whose duty it was to report directly to the emperor on the grand-master himself, if he caught him tripping.

The emperor did not name the matter to his old servitor, but sent the colonel to the actress, and forced her to give up the documents. There was, however, in this merited slight to a man who had been for so many years all-powerful, a mortification, which, if not expressed to a despotic master, may be readily supposed to have remained unforgotten.

"Count Benkendorf died in the bosom of the Catholic church, &c." says Golovine. "His conversion, which only transpired after his death, greatly scandalised the emperor and the court."

The conversion of Benkendorf is undoubted, but there is much reason to believe that it was to the tenets of an Evangelical sect by which he was surrounded at the time of his death, not to the Roman Catholic faith.

On the death of Benkendorf, his office was given to Count Orloff, of unenviable notoriety; that is to say, as the man who, whether for his own misfortune or for that of the illustrious personages in question, had appeared like a bird of ill omen in the vicinity of Alexander, Constantine, Diebitch, and the Empress Elizabeth, or sat at the same table with them, at the eve of their sudden deaths. And whilst upon this subject, it is as well to notice a rumour prevalent in St. Petersburg, and which is offered here without comment on its truth or falsehood,—a matter indeed comparatively unimportant, since the fact of its having gained credence speaks volumes as to the opinion entertained in 1845 by the higher classes in Russia, of those who govern them. The story is as follows:—The colonel alluded to as having so long acted in a humble nook of his office the part of counter-spy on the grand-master, when the fact transpired of his having the imperial ear, was eagerly invited by the most powerful courtiers. One day he dined with the minister of

war; he rose from table indisposed, and that night he was a corpse. Where would such insinuations find a moment's echo in the West, even among the bitterest invectives of party malice?

Golovine, who may be said to speak the common belief of the higher classes, says, in allusion to the deaths of the personages first cited, "that Nicholas had not the courage to displace Diebitch, and that the latter died of cholera, or of poison, taken willingly or unwillingly; for history has not cleared up which. Then followed the death of Constantine, just as he was about to become embarrassing to his brother. His own physician was not present at his death-bed. He was replaced by the town-doctor, who received an order for this service: the governor of the province was also rewarded."

"It suffices that any person's death should be useful to a sovereign," says the Russian author, "to cause his being accused of it, if circumstances tend in the smallest degree to favour this conjecture. The Princess of Lovicz died, too, just as her reception at court became an embarrassing point of etiquette. I know that there are officious servitors who go beyond the wishes of their master, but it must be at least admitted, that here are many

deaths suspiciously opportune, particularly if we add to them that of the Empress Elizabeth."

"Count Orloff, who has just replaced Benkendorf," says Ivan Golovine, "is in the intimacy of his majesty. He owes his advancement to the 25th of December. Being colonel of a regiment of horse-guards stationed near the palace, he was the first to resort with his regiment to the Isaac's plain. He has since been loaded with honours and rewards. One day, however, when the emperor was jocosely poking him in the stomach, the favourite took it in dudgeon, declaring 'that he was growing old, and wanted rest.' 'For that matter,' replied the emperor, 'go when you please.' Orloff, terrified at his own rashness, increased his insinuating assiduities towards the monarch, who vouchsafed to overlook this incident; but said on another occasion,—'No one's services are indispensable to me but those of Tchornichef,' (the minister of war). Orloff, when appointed chief of the secret police, made this profound remark:—'I do not see the use of the whole of this institution.' May he one day," continues Golovine, "see the utter inutility of the whole of it, and contribute to its abolishment!"

This observation, attributed to Orloff, has, however, more properly reference to the continuance

of an establishment on its former footing, whilst a portion of its power and action have been transferred to another department; for though Count Orloff has nominally succeeded to the office of Benkendorf, its glories have departed, and it would appear that the grand-master has no longer the absolute confidence reposed in him which that functionary once enjoyed.

General Douppelt, the factotum of its late chief continues to hold the situation of second in that department, of which now, as towards the closing years of Benkendorf's life, he has practically the direction. But though the secret office is now shorn of much of its former power, it is not to be hence deduced, that the amount of oppression has in any measure been mitigated; for, on the one hand, the still more infamous institution of the civil police has grown in influence with the emperor, and on the other, he has delegated for certain purposes the full extent of his own unlimited authority to another individual, who has exercised it with wholesale and sanguinary violence. It is the present minister of the interior, aide-de-camp of the emperor, Perowski, (to the best of the author's belief, brother of the general of that name who did not conquer Khiva,) who now seems to unite

much of the arbitrary power, with many of the former attributes of the grand-master.

Perowski, it must be premised, ranks with Benkendorf as one of the most zealous and honest of those who have enjoyed the favour of Nicholas. He is the only one, indeed, on whom Golovine lavishes any praise; he says "M. Perowski has secured an honourable place in the annals of Russian administration." The author has no reason to call in question the integrity of Perowski's intentions, but he appears to belong to the same school as Araktcheief, the tyrannical administrator of the empire under Alexander, and as Yermoloff, to whom the subjugation and government of the Caucasus was once intrusted. Such men are spoken of with respect, because the honesty of intention, perhaps justly attributed to them, shines in the midst of the general and unblushing corruption of surrounding society; though the cruel means to which they resort, and the sanguinary nature of their energy when irritated by difficulties, or roused to anger by opposition, would probably draw down a very different judgment on their conduct from a civilized people. Ruthless violence is no longer considered at the present day as fitted to soften the savage, to enlighten the barbarous, or

to reform corruption. The history of society affords no one instance of its success in attaining this object. But if those advocates of reform who seek to effect it by the exercise of injustice and the inspiration of terror, be judged almost as great a curse to humanity, as their dishonest but less violent colleagues, there can be no question of their superiority over those who blend all the oriental tryanny with the vices, meanness, and corruption of the oriental slave; and such unhappily is the character of most of those who attain to power under the system by which the Russian empire is governed; and in this category we must class Kakoshkine, the present chief of the civil police.

On taking office, Perowski commenced a crusade against existing abuses, and as the most crying, immediately came in contact with the civil police of St. Petersburg. He discovered their connivance with the thieves and assassins of the metropolis stigmatised in the "Revelations of Russia;" he brought to light their infamous malpractices, and denounced to the emperor their chief, a man of low origin, who, with a salary of a few hundred pounds, has notoriously purchased an eatate worth £6,000 per annum from his savings, *i. e.* from his conni-

vance and participation in the guilt of his subordinates.

"He had attacked," says Golovine, "the infamous police of St. Petersburg, and only desisted when he found it shielded by the imperial protection; a fact which has earned for Kakoshkine the surname of *Cache coquin* (screen-rascal). The agents of the minister had discovered in St. Petersburg, the existence of an association of robbers, consisting of several hundred men, and his investigation led him to demand from the emperor the dismissal of Kakoshkine; but his majesty merely reprimanded that functionary, and replied to his minister that it was thanks to the grand-master that he had slept quietly in bed for the last twenty years."

But the emperor, at the same time, gave his favourite *carte blanche* to clear the capital, by any means he could devise, of the thieves by which it was infested.

It is about a year and half ago that Perowski, debarred from interfering with Kakoshkine and his myrmidons, commenced his crusade against those pitiful knaves who rob without the sanction of an imperial uniform, though in almost every case under the protection of those who do.

His method of proceeding was that of the

Turkish pashas in the good old times. Having ascertained the houses of entertainment frequented by the suspicious characters of the capital, and the hours at which they chiefly resorted thither, he caused these places of rendezvous to be simultaneously surrounded, thus netting all whom they contained. These people were to the number of many hundreds conveyed to the castle of St. Petersburg, a fortress situated directly opposite the emperor's windows, on the other side of the Neva. Here they were summarily tried by court martial, and their presence in the houses of evil fame being deemed conclusive evidence of guilt, upwards of eight hundred were condemned to run the gauntlet, and made to undergo this fearful punishment.

The reign of terror then relaxed, and Perowski carried elsewhere his blind and violent inquisition. Kakoshkine subsequently had his revenge, by proving, what undoubtedly was true, that a great number of the sufferers were innocent, and thus causing the minister to be in his turn reprimanded.

Such are the wholesale means of terror to which in his growing irritability the emperor encourages his agents to resort, in his own capital, beneath his own eye, and for the chimerical purpose of thus reforming the corruption of a large city. We

retrace in them a courtier-like exhibition of the same spirit which dictated the wholesale religious persecution of Poland,—the transplantation of a whole people because they baffled the vigilance of imperial customs filled with venal agents.

All who have any acquaintance with the operation of despotic governments, will be prepared to find that only fresh evils, instead of any good result, followed such measures of arbitrary repression. For the information of those disposed to believe that a display of such undiscriminating severity, though involving the innocent in a common punishment with the guilty, must at least have served to deter the latter from their practices, we will select a few out of many cases which came under the knowledge of a single individual chiefly during the latter part of the year 1844, and in the course of 1845.

The author possesses the minutest details respecting these cases, from which he has selected a few of the most varied, for the perusal of the reader, using his own discretion as to what names to give, and what to withhold.

It is probable that every one circumstantially mentioned here will eventually lead to inquiry; and for the nature and results of an inquiry in Russia,

the reader need only be referred to the words of Marmier, quoted page 15 of this volume.

It should be borne in mind that these outrageous examples of injustice and misgovernment are but a few out of the many in possession of the author: whilst those in possession of the author, gleaned by one individual, in a city where there is no publicity, are but a few out of the multitude of fraudulent and oppressive transactions, of which they afford not an epitome, but a mere sample.

It should be remembered too, that these scenes have been enacted in the capital, whieh is the habitual residence of the emperor,—some of them only a few months back, some extending up to the very moment the reader is perusing these pages.

When such things occur up to the present hour, and under the emperor's very eye, what hope can reasonably be entertained of amelioration under the autocratic system, and what atrocities may not take place in remote portions of the empire?

To this question the prolonged and fiendish persecution of the nuns of Minsk—more horrible if taken all in all, than any atrocities recorded in times ancient or modern—furnishes a terrible answer.

The first of the anecdotes to which allusion has above been made, furnishes an illustration of

the manner in which laws the most obsolete are used by the privileged officials as instruments of extortion. There exists an old law in the Russian empire, of Draconic severity, which, though, bearing a *prima facie* appearance of rough justice, has long fallen in desuetude from the sheer impracticability of its ordinary application. It declares that every person accusing another of any transgression of the law, which he cannot substantiate, is to be punished as the accused would have been, if the offence had been proven against him.

An officer on terms of intimacy with a police naziratel, founded upon it the following expedient.

Having duly warned his confederate, he repaired to the shop of a wealthy draper in the Gostinoi Dvor. After long turning over different pieces of cloth, he contrived, under one pretext or another, to send both the shopmen at once to the further end of the shop. The shopmen, who do not trust even a Russian general, had not averted their eyes from their customer more than a few seconds, when on returning to the counter they perceived a parcel protruding under his cloak, which was not visible when he came into the shop. He was about to leave, saying they had nothing which would suit

him, when the shopmen called their master, the draper, who very humbly suggested to the officer that he had taken up a piece of cloth by mistake, and begged him to pay for it, or return it. The officer pretended to be outrageous. "Son of a dog, whose mother I have defiled! How dare you say so? Do you know that I am an officer?"

"Officer or no officer," said the shopkeeper, who was a first-guild merchant, and fancied he stood well with the police, "I have sent for the police, and if your nobility does not quietly give up what you have taken, you will be searched, and committed to prison."

The officer persisted, however, in refusing to give up what he had concealed, or in allowing himself to be searched, till the naziratel was sent for. On the arrival of this police official, with whom his plan had been preconcerted, he waited till the draper had made his accusation, and then opening his coat, pulled out a fox-skin cap, which he had compressed into a small compass, and then plumped out whilst the shopmen's backs were turned.

"I take you to witness," said the officer, "that he has made an accusation of theft, which would, if proved, have occasioned my being exiled to Siberia; I shall now demand the application of the same penalty to himself."

The draper, who was experienced in the usage of the courts, and not to be frightened with squibs, as he had proved, was yet on due inquiry glad to compromise matters with the officer for fifty thousand roubles (£2000). Being a rich man, he was aware that had he not done so, the police would have seized this pretext to ruin him.

A man from the Polish provinces had a sum of ten thousand roubles (£400) stolen from his drawers, which were broken open; the thief, who was on good terms with the police, divided the amount with them, and brought an accusation against the man he had robbed, to meet the one directed against himself.

They were both imprisoned, the robber only for form's sake, being let out at the end of a few days; the Pole was kept a whole year incarcerated, unable even to obtain a trial. By dint of incessant petitions, at the expiration of this period his case was looked into. Kakoshkine's police then contended that the man who had committed the robbery was dead; and the other, without hearing any tidings of his money, or receiving any redress, was let out on bail. Not having, however, been acquitted of the charge brought against him, he was thus enlarged with the liability of being incarcerated afresh

at any moment at which he should attempt to press the investigation further.

A Mr. Kolbe, teacher in the families of Barclay de Tolly and of Diebitch (who married that general's daughter), being accused twelve years ago of having abetted in getting a child baptised according to the Lutheran instead of the Greek ritual, was harassed by a law-suit during *twelve years;* this year his sentence was pronounced by the *ugolodne palat*, which condemned him to *three days imprisonment.* On being asked, according to the usual form, whether he was satisfied with the decision, he replied that he was not. He was, however, maliciously represented to the emperor as having said "that he was not satisfied with Russian law." Whereupon his imperial majesty ordered him to be expulsed the country.

It must not be imagined, however, that Russian justice is always so tardy. Two brothers, named Panoff, extensive butchers and graziers, were bankrupt. It was reported that they had concealed eighty thousand pounds from their creditors, and consequently an order was obtained to try them by *court martial!* One of the bankrupts, to gain time, bribed the doctor of the prison, and retired to the hospital, where he was in bed with a plaster on his

head, when generals, aides-de-camp, and colonels flocked to his bed-side. They removed the bandages, and feeling his pulse themselves, ordered the removal of so precious a prey to the *ordonanz haus* (military prison), where they found means to overcome alike the secretive tendencies of the butcher, and to disappoint the inquisitiveness of his creditors.

The day after the nomination of this military commission to try a bankrupt butcher, a fellow-prisoner, who had been an officer, applied to be judged by a similar court. But this favour was denied him, and his case still lingers on. He was a man from whom property was withheld, not from whom anything could be extorted.

An officer in the army, who had served in the Turkish war, importuned the bureaucracy of the civil police office, presided by General Kokoshkine, in obstinately investigating the case of a third party; he was suddenly arrested on the charge of stealing a cloak in the very anteroom of the police chief, an accusation which bore on the face of it the most glaring improbability; he was condemned and sent to Siberia.

But if justice in Russia sometimes strikes the innocent with severity, it sometimes punishes the

guilty, and displays not unfrequently a degree of mildness fitted to win criminals back to the paths of virtue.

The inhabitants of a house in the Vasili Ostroff were long inconvenienced by the fearful cries of a female slave belonging to a *pamojnik*, or police officer, a fellow-lodger. This wretched woman, in the last stage of weakness and emaciation, was tortured by the father and son, who, harnessing her to a cart, flogged her round and round the yard, and actually through the public streets, with a cart-whip. As they were police officers no one dared make an observation till some chance brought the matter to the knowledge of the emperor, who ordered these brutes to be tried in the criminal court. The ponderous chain with which she was habitually chained to the wall, was produced in court. The delinquents were merely condemned to quit the government of St. Petersburg for an adjacent one.

Again, two Chenovniks (or men of rank,) named Emilianovitch and Ivanoff, forged a set of papers as being sent from their department with extraordinary powers, and succeeded in swindling the governors of seven different governments. One of these worthies had been employed to draw

the sums of money, the other was a confederate in the office through which the receipts and reports relating to the transaction passed, where he carefully destroyed all these documents. This trade had been long carried on, and would probably never have been detected, had not the most active of the two parties retired from business and married, cheating his quondam friend out of a portion of the proceeds. Hereupon the aggrieved party finding his income stopped, determined to forestall any possible detection, and turned what is called in this country "queen's evidence" upon his friend. In consequence of this voluntary confession, he was not deprived of his rank, but only suspended in it, and condemned to serve for a few years as a soldier. His friend, who had been more actively guilty, was only deprived of one rank, and immediately provided with a situation in Kazan.

A creditor to the amount of £100,000 on the Rosamoffski estate, which was divided between several of the heirs of its late proprietor, applied through the courts of Moscow for its recovery. The first sum in question, amounting to about £10,000, was paid over to him by order of the court. One of these heirs, however, happened to be Ouvaroff, the Minister of Instruction.

Through his powerful interest, the creditor was required in another court to refund even the sum he had received, and on his refusal was, under one pretext or other, incarcerated for the space of five years; at length, however, being a clever, energetic, and monied man, he got his case decided in his favour in the Imperial Council, the last court of appeal, which is about as rarely resorted to as our House of Lords. The minister had therefore imprisoned during five years, for the sum of ten thousand pounds, the man to whom it was eventually decided that he owed a hundred thousand. The prisoner then obtained his liberty, but many months after, up to the present time, of the thousands awarded to him, he had received—0!

It would appear from the two following instances, both that the length of time cases are pending does not prevent very painful errors of judgment, and that the compensation made to the victims of mistakes, is not quite complete or satisfactory.

About the spring of 1844, the driver of a vehicle plying for hire, was murdered near the dock-yards of Auchta. It was one of those cases in which, from its casual publicity, it was necessary for the police to punish some one, and consequently a cripple was selected as the least valuable criminal

that could be pitched upon, where an able-bodied man is worth a given number of roubles. The poor wretch was knouted. Being neither a Pole nor a political offender, he survived the execution, and he was about being sent to Siberia, when by one of those strange chances which so often reveal murder, the real assassin came to light. It became obvious that the cripple had been unjustly punished, and he was therefore by law entitled to an indemnity amounting to a certain sum for every blow of the knout which he had received, and which was duly awarded him. But this indemnity, which no doubt would have been very gratifying to the victim of this untoward mistake to receive, it was equally so to the cupidity of the authorities to retain. Months after he had not received it, but was still in durance, where he will no doubt remain till only too happy to give his tormentors a quittance in full.

In another instance, three "*men of rank*" had stolen a small image of a saint: the evidence was clear against two, the third was arrested on suspicion of being an accessory. The two former were acquitted; the latter, who had no friends, was condemned to Siberia,—the chance of falling ill alone preventing his being sent thither. In

the hospital, he managed to interest some one in his story, and his case was looked into again, and found to be so flagrantly unjust, that the criminal court reversed its own decree.

This crime of robbing a holy image is considered as peculiarly heinous, though sacrileges are becoming much more frequent; for instance, the next case to the preceding is that of a chinovnik, or nobleman of office, condemned to Siberia for cutting off and stealing the fur collar of a cloak in a church during service time.

A retired captain in the navy, named Kireieff, had two brothers high in office, in St. Petersburg. On the death of his father, he came up from the country to receive his share of the heritage, which they refused to pay over to him. Some words had ensued, and the captain threatened to take legal proceedings.

One of the brothers, fearing this, repaired to the secret police-office, and declaring that his brother had attempted to murder him, requested that he might be quietly got out of the way, to save the family the annoyance of sending him to trial. The captain was immediately placed in durance, and four-and-twenty hours after removed in a kibitka to some unknown part of the empire, notwith-

standing his protestations of innocence, and his entreaties that his case should be investigated.

A moujik related that, in the hospital of the prison, having offended one of the *fershels*, or surgeons' assistants, the latter removed him to the mad ward, where experiments of all kinds were tried upon him to torment him. It is as well to mention here, that when prisoners are supposed to feign being dumb or idiotic, the practice is still resorted to of pricking their feet, and actually lifting up their toe-nails, to detect them.

Another moujik was at the same time tortured, through the malice of the assistants; who, amidst peals of laughter, fomented some part of his body with a burning mixture, instead of the soothing lotion ordered by the head doctor. This was, notwithstanding the fact that the last-mentioned personage had, a few weeks previously, caused one of these very assistants to be punished by the infliction of some hundred lashes.

The continuance of such a state of things as these anecdotes indicate, cannot be otherwise than painful and distasteful to the Russian emperor. Its previous existence must have been as much so to his predecessors as to himself,—whenever conscious of it. It would be absurd to suppose that

any despot, however unscrupulous and selfish, unless tainted with absolute insanity, should ever have regarded with complacency the corruption of his agents, and the exercise of a vexatious policy by them towards his subjects, for the sole advantage of these faithless servants, at the expense of his interests; for it is obvious that the efficiency of these agents, as instruments, must be impaired by such habits; whilst they are, at the same time, exhausting or impeding the wealth or strength of his people, which would otherwise have remained applicable to his own imperial purposes.

The idea may hence suggest itself to the reader, that the author might more beneficially have utilised his sources of information, by bringing these matters under the private notice of the emperor, than by exposing them to the public of a distant and foreign country.

In the late reign, as the reader may see by reference to the "Revelations of Russia," an association was formed, comprising all the worth, talent, and high birth of the empire, for this identical purpose. The result of their attempts, even under Alexander, a well-meaning prince, was so unsatisfactory as to lead them to the conclusion that nothing but the extinction of the despotism

would cure the evil; and this society merged into the conspiracy, which feebly exploded on the accession of Nicholas. The author has some reason to believe that his open denunciations have led to certain investigations; but in addition to the cause which rendered these abortive in the reign of Alexander, there exists another quite as potent with the emperor Nicholas, which still further paralyses their effect.

Now, as ever, all the officials of the empire, from high to low,—with rare exceptions,—stick together. Let us imagine a murder committed in England; and the police, the coroner, the jury, and reporters, all in collusion to declare that the victim died a natural death,—what credit would the public give to witnesses who saw the deed committed? Yet it is in that hypothetical position of the public that a Russian sovereign is commonly placed. When, therefore, an investigation is ordered, it leads only to an individual result, —and that only in a particular case: viz., when confided to a personage influential enough to set the remaining authorities at defiance, and anxious to bring in a clique of his own, who, on attaining office, resort straightway to the same practices. If he act from mere zeal, and be not seconded by

such a powerful interest, his efforts remain powerless as those of a madman striking at a room-full of smoke,—which nowhere resists and everywhere eludes his grasp. Such has always been the case where the sovereign was willing to punish condignly on discovery ; but with all his merciless severity in ordinary cases, Nicholas is unwilling to inflict any punishment in which men useful in upholding his despotic authority would be involved.

The want of penetration sufficiently acute in an autocrat to pierce the mist of deception by which he is surrounded, may prove equally fatal to his subjects, and lead in a like manner to their abandonment to extortioners and oppressors; but it does not leave the same stigma on the character of the prince, as when we see him consciously entrusting power to men of infamous character, whom he considers devoted to his person, or to his despotic system : and this Nicholas has done, as sufficient evidence is adduced to prove in these chapters.

This interested exception to the merciless severity of his disposition, which might otherwise have been deemed conscientiously misplaced, darkens it ; just as the proofs he has given of being uninfluenced by religious superstition, adds a deeper shade to

the cruelty of religious persecution,—hideous, when born of fanaticism, but a thousand-fold more so, when the deliberate offspring of a politician's brain.

As the emperor continues his rule, and the author his more close investigation of his political conduct, it assumes a complexion more repulsive. And yet the system is now mainly defended on the character of the man;—and that character the author has been judged to have handled with undue severity. Hence he had felt called upon to point out such circumstances as might corroborate the truthfulness of the censure he had passed, —not alone in self-justification, but because advocating the cause—and endeavouring to make known the wrongs—of millions, and of races which will be still full of youth when the autocrat himself is ashes.

CHAPTER III.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS AND HIS ADVISERS.

Nesselrode, Minister for Foreign Affairs—Pozzo di Borgo—Cancrine.

Charles Albert de Nesselrode, still at the head of foreign affairs, is a little sharp old man, far advancing into the vale of years. Born at Lisbon, some seventy-five years ago, originally brought into notice at the time of the Russian mission to the French consul, and raised to power during the invasion of 1812, he has grown grey in office; and as presiding so long the foreign policy of an empire so vast and ambitious, is ranked in the popular estimation of Europe, amongst cabinet celebrities, with Talleyrand and Metternich.

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* According to Golovine,—"born within sight of Lisbon on board an English ship, of German parents in the Russian service;" on which account he observes ironically that, four powers might claim the glory of possessing him among their subjects."

Nevertheless, between the astuteness and talent of Metternich and Nesselrode, and the power which each has exercised, there lies a world of difference. Whilst Metternich has governed, and governs, an empire like a sovereign, Nesselrode has never been more than the chief of his department. The knowledge acquired by a hard-working minister, during more than a quarter of a century, of all the tortuous secrets of his cabinet, and treasured up by a retentive memory, have made him too valuable a servitor to discard; particularly when adding, as he does, to this qualification, a perfect pliancy to the will of his sovereign.

Nesselrode, who hands down the traditionary policy of the Romanoffs, will not incur the imperial displeasure, by censuring any rash departure from it. He yields submissively in the moment of wrath; and seeming proud to be a mere instrument in his master's hands, he is allowed to proceed again in the same routine. He has had much to say in the guidance of the foreign policy of the empire,—and may again, if increasing years will allow him; but it has only been when the indifference of Alexander or of his favourites left him at liberty to act. The present emperor

—at least since the revolution of July—has been too determined in the bent of his foreign relations to leave anything to the discretion of this minister, except the choice of means conducing to a pre-determined end; and on these he is consulted as a vast and passionless encyclopædia of political knowledge, which is opened to extract under a certain heading the information required for a given purpose.

Nesselrode is, therefore, little to be blamed or praised for the external policy of the empire during the last fifteen years; and it is upon the same terms that he still maintains his office.

Golovine, who acknowledges a personal quarrel, speaks of him very slightingly, and he repeats a story current in St. Petersburg, of his having been, first a naval, and then a cavalry officer; from which capacity he was removed to the diplomatic service by the caprice of the Emperor Paul, who took it into his head that he looked more like a diplomatist than a soldier. This version has at least none of that improbability or originality which would characterise it in other countries. Nicholas disposes, in a manner quite as arbitrary, of the destination even of those amongst his subjects on whom his favour shines.

Four or five years ago, a young Gargarin (son of the Russian agent at the Court of Rome, who so mystified the holy pontiff) returned to Russia, filled with aversion for the public service, and particularly to the military profession, though of a spirited and courageous disposition. It hence occurred to him, that by volunteering to the Caucasus, and fighting hard through a campaign or two, he might earn the privilege of retiring into private life, without being, as otherwise happens, marked out for unceasing persecution by the higher authorities. He repaired thither—distinguished himself for his gallantry—was rewarded with the cross of St. George—and flattered himself that he had succeeded in the attainment of his wish, when, unluckily, at a fête at Peterhoff, just previous to his quitting the imperial uniform, he was so unlucky as to catch the emperor's eye.

Nicholas commended his spirit, gallantry, and conduct, and wound up his eulogium by observing, to the consternation of the unhappy youth, that after so brilliant a debut, and with an appearance so soldier-like, he could not think of allowing him to discontinue his military career.

Golovine adds, somewhat unjustly:—"that it is well known how little skilled was Paul the First

as a physiognomist." At least, in this instance, he was not deceived,—for Nesselrode has undoubtedly displayed considerable ability in the cabinet; though in Russia generally his talents are as much underrated as his genius and influence are exaggerated abroad. In foreign countries, for the last two-and-twenty years, Nesselrode alone has been popularly known of all the ministers and advisers of the Russian sovereigns; but in Russia a varying extent of influence and power has been attributed to Benkendorf, to Kleinmichel, to Tchornichef, to Orloff, to Menchikof, and even down to Kakoshkine, far greater than Nesselrode has ever been reputed to enjoy.

Much of the foreign reputation of Nesselrode was due to a very different personage, well known both in Paris and London, and now gathered to his fathers.

Pozzo di Borgo, long the boldest of Russian statesmen and diplomatists, some time previously to his death, had passed irretrievably out of the pale of imperial favour. This man, who had played a memorable part in the events of that Titanic struggle between the greatest of earth's conquerors and Great Britain,—in which empires tottered, kingdoms rose and fell, and nations were con-

vulsed,—this man remained, with a few of the surviving celebrities of that remarkable epoch, as the mythologic giants might have done, in the midst of men, after their combat. The great object of his life, in which all his energies had been exhausted, was effected; and his aim had been to spend the remainder of his days in peace, like all who have attained sufficient interest in the service of Russia to be allowed that favour, and a consequent knowledge of that country—far away from it.

Pozzo di Borgo—like the minister Cancrine, and like the personal friend of Nicholas, the General St. Aldegonde—had no more idea of enjoying their *otium cum dignitate* near the person, or within the dominions of Nicholas, than of building a house in their old age over a powder-mill. He had, consequently, made all necessary arrangements to reside in Paris, where it had long been understood that he was to spend his declining years as ambassador from the Court of Russia. To judge of the conduct of the emperor towards him, it is, however, necessary briefly to review his past life, and to recall the main object which had occupied and given it its chief importance.

Did you ever hear, reader, of a Corsican vendetta?

If not, as the life of Pozzo was one long vendetta, it is necessary briefly to explain the meaning of that word. The island mountaineers of Corsica, so remarkable for their energy and talent that we are often led to fancy that something of the Greek genius of the Hellenic colony established in their island, is discernible in their character,—are distinguished by a remarkable usage, which appears to have grown from a custom into a national propensity,—that of nourishing implacable animosities, which the lives of successive generations are employed and wasted to avenge. This is the vendetta; but it must not be confounded with the Highland, Red Indian, or Circassian feuds. Though subject to rules as immutable, there are redeeming traits in the vendetta, which have fatally rooted by ennobling it, till it has become as thoroughly identified with the national character as the love of a nomade life, or the passion for warlike or seafaring occupations inborn in other races.

The vendetta is never allowed for any personal offence, but only for an injury done to some one dear to the avenger. All considerations of danger or interest give way before it. The individual on whom it is affixed, must be duly warned of the

doom preparing for him; and when it happens that the same person is marked out for two or more vendettas, if closely pursued by one of them, on pleading this necessity he may take refuge on the very hearth of the man or family persecuting him in another quarrel; and for a specified time they may not either refuse him hospitality nor allow one hair of his head to be injured. A minute after this strange truce, the Corsican shoots his enemy like a dog. There is no pardon, no compromise possible;—the avenger may defer during years, but he may never forego his vengeance.

This blind and implacable hatred, in which his countrymen indulge, animated Pozzo towards no less a personage than Napoleon.

Charles Andrew Pozzo di Borgo, a young and fiery republican, had been appointed secretary of the Corsican notables, and deputed by them to the national assembly of France, at the bar of which assemblage he made several declamatory speeches against all tyranny and all princes.

It happened that at this period the island of Corsica was divided into two parties, the one comprising the inhabitants of the sea-coast, who were desirous of incorporation with the French republic; the other the upland population, bent on

securing the national independence for which the Corsicans had struggled with the Genoese and the French monarchy.

To the former faction belonged Arena, Salicetti, and the Buonaparte family, whilst the young Pozzo was powerful with the the latter. There will no doubt be some of the readers of these pages who will personally remember the anecdotes referring to this period, on which the old diplomatist during his residence in London, almost garrulously loved to dwell, and amongst others an instance which recurs but imperfectly to the author's recollection, though distinctly recalling that it hinged in substance on some trivial chance which prevented Pozzo from causing the young, and then unknown Napoleon Buonaparte, to be arrested.

The faction to which the Buonaparte family belonged, as it is well known, triumphed. Pozzo di Borgo was obliged to fly. When Napoleon rose to power he used it first to crush the adversaries of his family, and then somewhat vindictively to persecute his exiled countryman; who soon learned to centre in the consul or the emperor, as his fortunes grew, all the hate with which he had ever been inspired by the party, or the house, of his formidable rival.

From this moment his whole existence was centered in a war to the knife against Napoleon; from court to court, and camp to camp he flew, rousing enemies, and counselling them when roused.

When the proudest and most powerful of the successful soldier's enemies quailed before his fortune, humbling to it their kingly and imperial diadems —when the inconceivable destiny of this man was at its zenith, Pozzo's hatred continued untiring, and unawed by the power or glory of the conqueror, whose enmity unceasingly pursued him.

Having taken service in Russia at the peace of Tilsit, he quitted Alexander, whom the conqueror would otherwise have forced to expulse him, but he quitted with the prediction that a fresh and fatal struggle must eventually occur betwixt the two sovereigns, and by the offer of his services, whenever it should take place.

Five years spent in the most active enmity, brought him to the period which he had foretold. War had been declared betwixt France and Russia; and Napoleon was preparing to invade the latter country, when Pozzo appeared again at Alexander's court, and was again admitted to his confidence and favour. Wherever he went he

instilled courage into those who quailed before Napoleon's star, and every reverse found him serene and confident. When at length the tide of Napoleon's fortunes turned, and brought the allied armies to the French frontier, a moment of irresolution pervaded the councils of the banded princes, who dreaded to let fortune tempt them on to the soil of that terrible country, which had for so many years poured forth the irruption of its conquering armies, and into the den as it were of the lion who had so long scared them in their very capitals. They had driven him, indeed, till he was hunted down; but all hesitated to go into him when he stood at bay. The cowardice of Prussia, the two-faced treachery of Austria, and the natural irresolution of Alexander's character, combined, would undoubtedly have saved Napoleon. Pozzo di Borgo, who was well aware that this, if ever, was the moment to thrust home, and that if breathing time were given his great enemy, he would still baffle all his continental adversaries, when convinced that his influence or arguments would prove powerless, repaired to England, whose cabinet had undeviatingly followed a policy consonant with his own opinions, and brought back with him to the conference of Frankfort, Lord Castlereagh, who,

if without the talent, still with all the confident resolution which Pitt could have shown, turned the balance against Napoleon; and the allied armies were directed against Paris. Pozzo di Borgo himself penned Prince Schwartzenberg's famous proclamation, and soon after obtained the total exclusion of Napoleon's family; and on that occasion, turning to Talleyrand, exclaimed, radiant with triumph: "If I alone have not killed him, I have shovelled the last spadefull of earth upon his grave!"

Pozzo di Borgo's vendetta, was, as he deemed, now satisfied by the greatest fall which history chronicles, and this after he had witnessed a period in which his enemy had risen to so high an eminence, that the most energetic efforts he could make against him, appeared beneath the notice of the man whose victories enabled him to proscribe him from all the states of Europe. In the rancorous hatred which this state of things engendered towards Napoleon's person, he is said to have learned to include all who showed any strong devotion towards him; and hence, amongst other anomalous prejudices, is said to have arisen his hatred to the Polish people. About the period of the conference of Vienna, when Alexander, elated by his late

successes, set himself up as the liberator of Poland, with the view of uniting the whole twenty millions of that people beneath his presidency, his project was violently opposed by Pozzo di Borgo.

The landing of Napoleon from his island prison scared alike the princes and the vindictive Corsican, who suddenly found the victim of his vendetta, as it were, uprising from the grave on which he boasted that he had scattered the last shovel-full of earth.

We next find him present at Waterloo, and wounded in the ranks of the English on the memorable field which saw the spirit laid for ever, whose political resurrection had threatened to render his vengeance like the morsel swallowed and torn undigested from the vulture's craving maw. The great object which had hitherto filled his life was accomplished; but Pozzo found that he was now unfitted for any other career than that of quietly enjoying the honours and the wealth which he had insensibly attained in the pursuit of his revenge.

Originally starting in the world with liberal, if not with democratic ideas, he had come to be considered the most zealous absolutist in his opinions. He had grasped in his strong hand the tiller of the wavering bark of Russian policy; his exertions had

been more instrumental than those of any individual in procuring the restoration of the Bourbons, and it was hence naturally concluded that he was identified in feeling with the ambitious and despotic views of Russia, and the absolute tendencies of the Bourbon family. But such was not the case: Russia, the Bourbons, and the anti-liberal prejudices of European cabinets, had been to him mere instruments of vengeance, for which he entertained no predilections when his purpose was accomplished and their uses over, though some of his animosities seem to have lingered with the tenacity of Corsican vindictiveness in his mind.

There are many, no doubt, of the readers of these pages, as it has been before observed, who, from his long residence in this country and in Paris, must vividly remember how, arch diplomatist as he was, he loved to dwell on the subject of his native country, and the part he played in its history in the early period of his career. They cannot fail to recall how his dark southern eye, contrasting so strangely with his silvered hair, flashed as it were rekindling with the recollections of his youth, and how his fine countenance became animated into that expression natural to it, which the long dissimulation of the

statesman had taught him to disguise. In these moments of reference to that distant period, his ideas, like his features, were exhibited in their true form to the listener ; and it was obvious that in his present exalted position, as the representative of an absolute monarch, and the champion of those doctrines, which under the plea of order, are repressive of all progress, his thoughts reverted with regret to independent Corsica, and that his pride would have been to be one of the chiefs of its free republic. He appeared, perhaps, to lean towards a commonwealth somewhat oligarchic, but this oligarchic feeling basing itself upon republicanism, could only add fresh disgust to the oriental nature of the despotism of the government he was serving ; a despotism which not alone raises the lowest in station and in character to place and power, but renders them objects of the respect and envy of society ; and which can crush down rank or merit at its will or pleasure, overwhelming them with the public scorn.

Pozzo di Borgo hence not only determined to spend the closing years of his life out of Russia, but as regarded France, the country chosen by him in which to enjoy the honours and the pensions earned in the Russian service, he was influenced

by no predilections in favour of the Bourbons, whom he had accidentally served so well.

Both his natural sagacity which foresaw the consequences, and his now unbiassed personal feeling, led him to reprobate the absolutist tendencies of the elder branch of that family, if only because likely to disturb the tranquillity of the country which he had selected as a refuge for his old age.

When the revolution of July took place, he advocated the recognition of the new dynasty elected by the national choice, the more strenuously that he entertained much good will towards Louis Philippe, and was full of confidence in his wisdom and moderation. The Emperor Nicholas, who, on first ascending the throne, had been hitherto sufficiently occupied with the internal affairs of his empire, had continued Pozzo di Borgo in office, partly through the representations of Nesselrode, and partly through sympathy with his anti-Polish feeling; but on being made acquainted with the successful revolution which Pozzo had duly prognosticated, he was so violent in his condemnation of it, that no one but that veteran statesman and diplomatist dared counsel pacific measures. Nicholas was forced to temporize, but he treated the new sovereign with a degree of contempt which would have ruffled an

equanimity of temper less resolute, and which eventually recoiled upon himself; obliged as he has since been by circumstances, to interchange with him in an unrestricted manner, the courtesies common between princes.

It is now well known to have been the intention of Nicholas to attempt rashly to renew that great continental war against France, in which Europe triumphed when aided by the millions of Great Britain, and backed by her victorious fleets; but which without her co-operation would probably have resulted in making the tricolor float again over half its capitals. He was interrupted in his purpose by the Polish revolution, and Pozzo's influence then became invaluable with those who could restrain the turbulent spirit of that portion of the French nation panting to fly to the relief of Poland, and the overturn of nearly all other continental governments. But Nicholas, of whose character an implacable vindictiveness in little things, is as distinguishable a trait as it was in great ones in the mood of the old Corsican, never forgave the latter for his avowed esteem of the French king, for his confidence in him, or his unqualified advocacy of a pacific policy towards the order of things which Louis Philippe represented,—not even though the event proved the wisdom of this advice.

From that time he surrounded him with spies, a circumstance of which his ambassador could not long remain ignorant, and one which, though of usual occurrence with those of his rank, was still an indignity to a personage who had filled the exceptional post of confidant and counsellor of the policy of the empire in its extremest peril.

He further transmitted him an order to refuse, under different pretexts, to allow of the residence of several of his subjects in certain places; but Pozzo considering it beneath his dignity to lend himself to such a subterfuge, sent for the persons in question, and acquainted them with the command he had received.

The emperor and his servant were thus soon in a state of hostility; not that hostility which is openly declared, or tangibly manifests itself in actions, but which is incessantly evinced by tacit ill-will, masked by a strict regard to conventionalities. The emperor held indeed within his own dominion absolute power over his servitor, and abroad he could strip him of his office, of his pensions, and his honours; but on the other hand he found that he had to do with a master-spirit, one who, having struggled his life-long with the lion, was not to be scared by the ass in the lion's skin.

Pozzo had provided against Muscovite astuteness or caprice: he was in possession of documents and secrets which rendered him a dangerous enemy to offend, and he was far too wary to venture back to the country whose place and pension had still sufficient attractions for him to make him the very humble servant of its sovereign at a safe distance.

Within this given circle of mutual apprehensions, the persecution of the one, and the defiance of the other was restrained; but at length the emperor pitched upon the following means of annoyance. He was aware that Pozzo had made every preparation to end his days in Paris, that he had sought in France an alliance for his nephew and heir with one of it noblest families, in the person of a lady whose beauty and accomplishments are well known to the fashionable world of London. He had formed in that country, too, the friendships which were to solace his old age, and he had prepared there an asylum of fitting magnificence in which to pass it. This had been a boon long since conceded to him in reward for his services; and his temporary missions to the court of St. James's, were hence viewed by him, particularly when much prolonged, in the light of real hardships.

The Emperor Nicholas, learning what a griev-

ance they had become to the old man, finally removed him from the court of the Tuilleries to London.

This was a thunder-stroke to the ambassador, whose energies had become impaired by age and illness; and whilst hesitating what course he should take, death overtook him in the midst of his perplexity. It is whispered that there are certain documents left by the ambassador in the hands of his family, which the Russian cabinet has vainly reclaimed under the plea of their belonging to the chancery of the legation;—if so, they will now prove pledges for the fulfilment of such claims as he may have bequeathed to his relatives.

Amongst those to whose opinion Nicholas paid the most deference, may be cited Cancrine,—recently created Count Cancrine,—the late minister of finance; a personage of a totally different stamp from Nesselrode or any of his colleagues. Of obscure Jewish origin, he has been succeeded in the management of the finances of the empire by another of the same race, named Vrontchenko, (said to be a Russification of Rondchen,) notwithstanding the bitter personal prejudices of the emperor against this people, and the law which forbids their residence in the capitals and northern

governments of Russia. Cancrine is essentially the man of expedients, though he has always been considered by the emperor as a second Colbert. The fertility of his genius, and his remarkable ingenuity, tramelled by no patriotic considerations as to the eventual confusion into which his temporary shifts must entangle the finances of the country, inspired the emperor, whose government is so often pressed for money, with such unlimited confidence, that he considered Cancrine as a sort of monetary necromancer. All-powerful as a Russian sovereign is within his own dominions, even there he is cramped at every step, unless the god Plutus has been duly propitiated; and this ingenious minister, having induced the belief that he was the favourite priest of this divinity, was determined not to serve his imperial master on bended knee.

On the contrary, he affected the style of a political Abernethy, and when Nicholas wished him to resort to some of those financial expedients with which his brain seemed so inexhaustibly stored, he only replied by demanding retrenchment and reform, by declaring the impossibility of acceding to his demands, and by threatening to resign his portfolio. His sovereign master, so imperious with

other of his servants, was obliged to humour, coax, and conciliate him,—as if he had been a capricious beauty; condescending even to entreat him to retain his office: till one day, Cancrine having, according to the vulgar phrase, sufficiently feathered his nest, obdurately persisted in retiring to enjoy in Paris the fruits of his labours, leaving his successors to unravel, as best they could, the tangled web of the finances of the empire. If any gratitude were due to men for benefits unintentionally conferred, Cancrine, like all his predecessors, would be entitled to the gratitude of humanity,—as it has been chiefly through their instrumentality —through the deplorable state into which they have brought the finances of the empire, and the low condition to which they have brought its credit —that the peace of Europe has been these last fifteen years maintained. There is little question but that the wish nearest to the heart of Nicholas, is war with France. Happily, however, both himself and the living generation of generals and statesmen, have witnessed the impossibility of rendering available the resources of the state, without the pecuniary assistance of a wealthier power; and the Turkish and Polish campaigns repeating the lesson, have given them personal experience of the

difficulties to be encountered from scarcity of fnnds and absence of all credit.

Golovine speaks of him in favourable terms, but admits "that he did not neglect his private interests, to which the post he occupied gave him—more than to others—ample opportunity of attending."

He has amassed a fortune of 400,000 roubles per annum (upwards of £16,000). The pay and legal perquisites of a minister of finance do not exceed a few hundreds per annum, and he is forbidden by law, like all other officials, to receive any present, however innocently, under pain of degradation and banishment to Siberia.

The connexion of these two facts alone, if we suppose no deriliction of duty in the ex-minister, may be considered as casting far into the shade even the financial genius of the happy soldier of the old song—

"Who lived on his pay,
And spent half-a-crown out of sixpence a-day."

CHAPTER IV.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS AND HIS ADVISERS.

Kleinmichel—Tchornichef, the Minister of War.

Now that Benkendorf is dead, and Cancrine retired from office, the favour and confidence of Nicholas is considered to be chiefly divided, though in unequal degrees, between three individuals. To cite these personages rather according to their supposed influence with the emperor than their actual rank,—far before all others, stands Kleinmichel, the rising man in the empire, on whom his sovereign has conferred the dignity of Count, and the rank of General. He ostensibly presides the Department of Roads and Bridges, though acting as an administrative jack-of-all-trades.

Kakoshkine, already mentioned in this volume, filling the subordinate office of chief of the civil police of St. Petersburg,—a base employ, attempted to be dignified by making him imperial aid-de-

camp,—is considered to be next solidly rooted in the imperial favour. The emperor, convinced of his vigilance and fidelity in watching over his own person, resolutely shuts his eyes to the infamous practices of his servant, wherever brought to light.

Thirdly, may be cited Tchornichef, the minister of war, whose disgrace is now rumoured, as it has frequently been before ; but whom Nicholas is said at once to dread, and to consider indispensable.

The influence of General Kleinmichel with Nicholas, is accounted for, by public rumour, in a manner which does not become the writer, any more than the public, to notice ; but the three following anecdotes with regard to this personage, who now ranks as one of the first in the empire, are, however, adduced, to illustrate to the reader what class of people inevitably rise, in an unlimited despotism, to the favouritism of the sovereign, notwithstanding all the contempt he may at first sight entertain for such unscrupulous instruments.

They may also tend to point out the extraordinary social difference which exists between rank, title, and station, nominally analogous in our own country and in this oriental empire ; where, aping the style and costume of civilised lands, its ruler

and his servants, beneath the purple, the uniforms, the epaulettes, and stars, still feel and act in the spirit of the eastern despot, who raises the eunuch or menial to his councils; and where the intriguing eunuch or menial raised to power, is by turns cringingly servile, and arrogantly haughty.

This General Kleinmichel served in the office of Arakcheieff, (Alexander's sanguinary favourite, the founder of the military colonies,) doing duty as his private secretary, with the rank of Colonel.

Mr. Alexander Smith, who recently met with an accidental death in St. Petersburg, was in the habit of relating, that he had once occasion to seek an interview of this minister, whom he described as a violent and irritabie, but well-intentioned man. During the course of it, he begged this personage to refer to a memorial which he had forwarded to him. Arakcheieff desired his secretary, the Colonel Kleinmichel, to bring it. Through some accident or negligence, it had been placed where it could not be found till he had exhausted Arakcheieff's patience, which was very speedily the case. To the surprise of his visitor, the Russian vizier commenced abusing Kleinmichel in the most violent manner, and, bidding him approach, spat full into his face. The colonel bowed his head, wiping off

the spittle, and saying in a humble voice, *Vinabat*, "I am in error."

Mr. Alexander Smith was a clever Scotch engineer, for many years, and indeed up to the period of his death, inspector of all the steam engines of the Baltic fleet; he was also, to the best of the author's belief, brother-in-law of the engineer, Napier, the constructor of the *Fire-king* steam ship, and of the rapid two-funnel boats which ply upon the Thames.

Another Englishman, named Clayworth, also since deceased, after realising a considerable fortune as gas-fitter, plumber, painter, glazier, &c., in St. Petersburg, and who boasted that he had eventually made much money by collusions with Kleinmichel, was in the habit of observing that these golden opportunities were only justly due to him, considering that the general had been for many years some hundred pounds in his debt. For this sum, as he further related, he had so long made application in vain, that he despaired of ever obtaining the payment, till at length finding that fortune was lavishing its favours in every shape upon his debtor, he bethought himself as a last expedient of making an appeal to his honour and generosity. For this purpose, he repaired to his levee (for all rising men

in Russsia have their courts and courtiers), and presented him with a receipt in full. Kleinmichel took the receipt with a nod, but never forwarded the money, and on subsequent application, told him with hauteur, that the affair was long since settled, as Clayworth knew he held his acknowledgment of its payment. Perhaps it may be thought that the emperor was deceived in this man's character? Scarcely so. Kleinmichel, as he rose in influence, bitterly resented some slight he had received from Paskewitch; nevertheless, on the elevation of the latter to the rank of Field-marshal, and to the first of the fourteen classes of nobility, to which, by the bye, he was the only individual appertaining, he came to St. Petersburg. According to etiquette, it now became the duty of Kleinmichel to call on him. The emperor, who passes a large portion of his time in attending to punctilio, reminded Kleinmichel of this circumstance, who, intending to mortify his rival by taking no notice of him, and thinking his neglect would never come to the imperial ears, replied glibly that he had called on him that morning. As Kleinmichel went out, the field-marshal, however, stepped in; and it so chanced that the emperor observed to the latter that he had received the general's visit, which Paskewitch at once denied.

The emperor angrily reccalled and confronted Kleinmichel with him, who, detected in this very pitiful falsehood, bowed his head, and again hurriedly repeated *Vinabat*,—" I have erred." The emperor ordered him under arrest for several days, and he then resumed the even tenor of his way in the imperial favour.

Let us now see how such a man uses his influence. There are in the vicinity of St. Petersburg, several government works of greater or lesser magnitude, but each, like those of Alexandoroffsky and Colpenas, under the superintendence of a man dignified with the rank of General. As many Englishmen are necessarily employed in these factories, an idea appears to prevail with the government, that the mere fact of a man's being a native of England must qualify him to preside over such an establishment. The director of one of these, General Clarke, having died, Kleinmichel gave the situation to an English shoemaker and cobbler, named Smith, who is said never to have exercised any other calling. Smith's wife, or wife's sister, was nurse to Kleinmichel's children.

As a general rule, the only very certain channel of interest, whether with the emperor directly, or his ministers, is not derived from the protection or

recommendation of the princely families, or from the illustrations of the land; but through the intrigues of menials, nurses, and actresses.

Few sovereigns have ever appeared more jealous of governing for themselves than Nicholas; and his dread of being influenced, added to his personal hatred of his nobles, render him forewarned, and even unjustly prejudiced against their intercession; but for the hidden action of this under-current he is unprepared.

In an unlimited despotism like that of Russia, it would indeed appear that the interest is so strong to deceive, that an extraordinary firmness of character, and perspicuity of intellect, could alone preserve its autocratic ruler from eternal deception. A sovereign like Alexander, was aware of this peculiarity of his position; but a man of the character of Nicholas, who adds to considerable firmness and obstinacy an inordinate vanity, is readily convinced that he possesses, because he seeks to obtain, omniscience in his empire; and so it happens that whilst he plumes himself on being inaccessible to the influence of his favourites, or his nobles, and inexorably dooms the scion of a great house, despite all efforts made by his favour, he is still in three-fourths of his actions degraded to the condition of

a mere puppet, of which the strings, cunningly contrived, are pulled by slaves, menials, and prostitutes.

Thus it happens, that the author has known the marshal or president of the nobility of a district, long fruitlessly endeavouring to obtain a favour through a personage high in office, which a foreign actress flippantly undertook to procure, and succeeded in procuring for him, in four-and-twenty hours. Thus he has known a professor successfully founding his hopes on the interest of a milliner with the mistress of the lover of the wife of a man in power; a grey-headed general, the decision of his lawsuit, on the protection of a nurse in one of the imperial palaces; and a high judicial authority, his advancement, on the patronage of a foreign cook.

The services of Prince Tchornichef, the minister of war,—though differing in nature,—are said to be considered by the emperor as valuable of their kind as those of Kleinmichel or Kakoshkine. Kleinmichel, the pliant tool of despotism,—exhibiting the passive submissiveness of the chief eunuch of an oriental seraglio,—fulfilling complacently the same ignoble duties, and possessing the same insidious cunning—the same abject perseverance;—Kleinmichel is one of those men who, when treated

with insult and contumely by an absolute master, kiss the foot that spurns them, and then by the divulgation of important secrets,—by unwearying activity, — by rapid perception and unscrupulous execution of a despot's wishes,—eventually force him to employ, and at length consider them indispensable; because their total abdication of all the self-respect of man, if at first exciting disgust in that master's breast, is soon merged in appreciation of those qualities alike incompatible with personal dignity and indispensably necessary in the economy of a thorough despotism,—and because such agents, as in the case of Kleinmichel, inspire with confidence the unhappy prince who is conscious that he sleeps on a volcano, and is well aware that they possess neither kith, kin, nor root in his dominions; having, to prove their servile zeal, become so generally detested, that like the Snarleyow in Marryatt's novel of that name, their interest becomes indissolubly bound up with the life of their protector. Kleinmichel is supposed to be more frequently consulted on all general subjects by the emperor than any one in the empire; while Kakoshkine is esteemed by his master as the vigilant and devoted chief of a police, whose first duty is considered to be protection of the imperial person

and interests, to which all the usual objects of such an institution are unhesitatingly sacrificed. Few in Russia accord to Kakoshkine that skill in his peculiar occupation attributed to him by his master; but if far from possessing the ingenuity of Vidocq, he is universally considered as ranking many degrees below him in infamy of character.

Prince Tchornichef must not be classed with these men—the vermin of a profoundly demoralised society,—who would never have been admitted into the society of his valet, if not refracting, as they do, the light of imperial favour; which, in Russia, like the rays of the sun, raises the miasma of filth and corruption to an offensive altitude in the social atmosphere.

Prince Tchornichef, a man of courtly habits and manners, recalls the noble of the reign of Charles the II. or Louis the XV.,—or perhaps rather of an antecedent period, less profligate, though more ruthlessly unscrupulous,—but he has nothing in common, except a share of his sovereign's confidence, with the two other individuals cited, who can only be compared to those slaves who by pandering to the caprice of their tyrants, rise in the east from menial servitude to power.

The character of Tchornichef is far from being

unimpeachable. It is popularly rumoured of him that he was mainly instrumental in causing the banishment of his wealthy relative, Count Tchornichef,—implicated in the conspiracy of the nobility, —in the hope of securing his estates, for which he made application, as the reward of his activity and zeal.

Golovine, in relating this anecdote, says "that the emperor took Tchornichef to the mother of the man he had caused to be condemned, intimating his imperial wish that she would adopt him instead of the son she had lost. But this worthy woman replied that she would willingly receive him as an aide-de-camp of her emperor, but could never be induced to regard him as a relative."

He further narrates, that when, in the council of the empire, some law was attempted to be found which might justify the transference to him of the property he coveted, Count M—, who was opposed to his claim, observed ironically that there was somewhere a law by which the clothes of the culprit went to the hangman.

Tchornichef, in the Polish war, undoubtedly impeded the progress of Diebitch, the commander of the Russian force, by withholding from him reinforcements and supplies; and inspired by a like

animosity, he is said to be now pursuing the same line of conduct with regard to Worontzow in the Caucasus.

Mention has been made elsewhere of the rumour attributing to him the death of a certain personage connected with the secret office; and at least its prevalence will probably before long be authenticated through the publication of some singular revelations, by a person who lived for many years in the families of the field-marshals Barclay de Tolly and Diebitch.

Active and intriguing,—uniting the corruption of a Walpole to the ruthless avidity of a Leicester,—the dissemination in Russian society of the suspicion above named, may serve to illustrate the opinion popularly entertained of the unscrupulous character of the minister of war.

Notwithstanding this popular estimate of it, he holds a respectable place amidst his compeers in power and favour. His intrigues have been in the higher regions of courts,—he has plotted to worm out the secrets of governments, or to ruin the commanders of armies;—but he has seldom descended lower than to endeavour to secure a vast estate.

Now even Prince Volkonski,—the friend and confidant of the Emperor Alexander, long ambas-

sador to the court of France, and now minister of the imperial household,—daily holds a levee in his apartments, receiving all contractors, tradesmen, cooks, and actresses, to whom he vends his protection, and negociates shilling by shilling perquisites which the law would punish him capitally for receiving! Yet the minister of the imperial court forms no unfavourable exception to the mass of his fellow dignitaries.

Tchornichef, first created count, and lastly prince, has served with distinction in his younger years, both as a soldier and diplomatist; and he has, perhaps, shown more natural ability than any of those who have shared, or share, in any other than a strictly professional sense, the confidence of the Emperor Nicholas. Endowed with great versatility, as a young man he first shone at Napoleon's court as a leader of the fashions of the day, and whilst supposed to be absorbed in the most frivolous pursuits, both discovered in the boudoir the meditated invasion of Russia, and obtained all the plans of the impending campaign, through the intermedium of a certain Michel, employed in the military clothing department of the French war-office, who had obtained them with the assistance of three other *employés*, named Saget, Salmon, and Moise.

With this information Tchornichef quitted Paris, narrowly escaping the pursuit set on foot.

On the flight of the young diplomatist, the treachery of his informants was brought to light; and being criminally prosecuted, Michel was condemned to death, and executed in May, 1812. Saget, who had been defended on his trial by the elder Dupin, was sent for life to the galleys. During the war of invasion, Tchornichef being employed in a military capacity, was sent by Alexander to Admiral Tchitchagoff, to convey to the latter his instructions, and to promise him reinforcements which were never sent. Here at the head of a body of Cossacs he distinguished himself as an enterprising partisan leader. On the invasion of France by the allied armies, he commanded a division of regular troops, and appears to have shown as much skill as was displayed by any of the allied generals, in a campaign carried on by such disproportionate numbers against an army demoralized by unparalleled reverses.

Having been now for many years minister of war, Tchornichef is said, alone in the empire, thoroughly to understand its military administration. At least with this conviction he appears to have impressed the emperor, who has heaped on him

estates and titles, provided him successively with rich wives, and built a palace in the Morskoi of which the usufruct is assigned to him. He has always represented the Russian minority of office, and hence is said to have originated his hatred of Diebitch, and the German party.

Some insinuate that, bold, crafty, and dangerous, he has inspired Nicholas with considerable awe; and it is at least certain, that, notwithstanding occasional rumours of impending disgrace and the growing favour of Kleinmichel, Tchornichef still continues in office.

To the attainment of that office, to the establishment of a firm position, and to cabals against rivals, the minister of war seems to have directed energies and confined a capacity of no common order. But this is in the true spirit of his age and country, where men of the best abilities neglect the barren acquirement of knowledge, to cultivate the easy and more profitable tact of seeming to possess it; seeking only proficiency in those arts of intrigue which supply every deficiency, and by which alone success is to be attained. He is said to have been strikingly handsome in his youth; and is now far advancing into years, though with considerable pretensions to juvenility, which are better

supported by a still vivid Cossac eye and erect martial figure, than by the raven locks of a well-curled wig, the constraint of stays, and the brilliant *ratélier* of factitious teeth, which occur on recalling to memory his "personal presentment."

There are, however, a few personages in the empire, very far superior both in character and acquirements to those we have named, who enjoy in a much more limited degree the confidence of the emperor. These are Count, now Prince Worontzow, Admiral Greig, and Field-marshal Prince Paskewitch d'Erivansky.

In the two first cases, the confidence reposed in these individuals has been strictly professional, and in the last is considered to be chiefly so.

These three personages, in their respective characters, of soldier, sailor, or administrator, have been considered, and not without much justice, as being the most skilful men in the empire.

The favour they have enjoyed, which indeed has never been greater than to secure for them temporarily a discretionary power in the departments they have presided, or over the territories they have governed, has only been vouchsafed to them at intervals, succeeded by intervals of disgrace, and has probably been solely owing to the universally recognised superiority of their abilities.

Paskewitch has the reputation of being a man of energy and integrity, though violent and tyrannical. As regards his military career, he served with some distinction in the war with Napoleon, and subsequently as commanding a Russian army in Georgia, and on the Persian frontier, when the title of d'Erivansky was conferred upon him for the capture of the city of Erivan, and the success of his campaign. At this period he shared with Diebitch Zabalkansky (or the crosser of the Balkan), the reputation of being the most skilful commander in the Russian service.

Paskewitch represented in the army the Russian, as Diebitch did the German faction. During the Polish war, Diebitch had made little progress, though opposed to Skrynetski (Skrzynecki), a man, whose moral timidity offered a strange, but not uncommon contrast with his personal valour, and who never followed up his successes, either from incapacity, or because dreading that their consequences might rouse the whole Polish people, and thus indispose the great powers, to whom, like many others, he vainly looked for a favourable solution of the national question. It must, however, be mentioned, that Count (now Prince) Tchornichef, the minister of war, (of the Russian party,) notoriously

threw every impediment in the way of the German Diebitch, withholding from him reinforcements in men and stores at the most critical moments. At Ostrolenka, the last great battle which Diebitch fought, he had succeeded in utterly surprising Skrynetski, who, nevertheless, after a desperate and sanguinary fight, obliged the Russians to recross the river Narew, and remained master of the field. So great was, however, the discouragement into which he had fallen, increased by the prodigious loss of officers in the combat, that he precipitately retreated from the field he had conquered, thus converting this dearly purchased victory into an unequivocal defeat; but, on the other hand, Diebitch did not even occupy the ground which Skrynetski had quitted, but remained inactive. Thus, as throughout the war, both Diebitch and his adversary played the part of those generals in the last Spanish war, who, whether on the side of Don Carlos or his niece, reciprocally defeated each other, and were commonly no further advanced after victories which they were incapable of following up. Diebitch died suddenly,—poisoned, according to the popular belief in Russia, by the Russian faction; and Paskewitch took his place. Paskewitch acted with that decision which is a characteristic difference between

the operations of German and Russian commanders, and which, in this instance, gave him a singular advantage, both over his predecessor and the antagonist who so much resembled that predecessor in indecision of character. He acted promptly and boldly; Skrynetski with more than his previous irresolution; and thus the war was put an end to, and Poland's independence forfeited.

But there was far more of good fortune than of merit in this successful boldness; for the execution of his plan was as rash and unskilful as it was happy. To cross the Vistula, he led his army by a flank march under the cannon of Modlin, where he would have exposed himself to destruction, if attacked even with an army less unwieldly than that which he commanded. But he was not attacked, either when before Modlin, nor during the passage of the river; and by the happy issue of a manœuvre, which depended for success on the supineness of his adversary, he was speedily enabled to put an end to the campaign on which depended the political existence of Poland. Paskewitch was afterwards created Prince of Warsaw, and entrusted with the government of the country, which had been rather delivered up to him by the errors of its defenders, than conquered by his own sword.

The unpretending field-marshal has, therefore, never, during his career, had occasion to prove any remarkable military genius; but the emperor has been anxious to give him, in spite of himself, the reputation of a great captain. The reign of Nicholas is compared by his flatterers to that of Peter the Great, of Catherine, Napoleon, and Augustus. As Poushkin, the first of Russian poets, flourished, and Karamsin the historian closed his career in it, there appeared to be wanting to its completion a great captain, a character into which it was impossible to think of transforming any one else in the empire but Paskewitch.

Admiral Greig, the son of an English admiral of that name in Catherine's service, was brought up in the English navy, and for a considerable period entrusted with unlimited authority on the Black Sea. Count Worontzow, also brought up in England, had for many years an equal authority confided to him throughout Southern Russia. Greig and Worontzow have alone maintained a character of which any of the subjects of a free and really civilised state might be proud. Though every man in the empire is aware that to attempt to change the abuses and corruption of the administration, would be to combat the windmills of Don

Quixote; still such public officers as Greig and Worontzow could not cease in their efforts to restrain them, and consequently raised against them the whole bureaucratcy. The popularity which Worontzow had acquired amongst the nobility and the people, gave umbrage to imperial jealousy. Greig was disgraced from the first of these causes, under pretext of a *mesalliance* which he had made with a Jewess. Worontzow, from a combination of both. He has since been restored to favour, and was this year sent as the only man in the empire whose veracity and integrity could be depended on, to undertake in the western Caucasus, a campaign, whose unfortunate termination in confusion and disgrace has verified his anticipations, and obtained for him the barren title of prince.

There was another individual, Count Matutsewicz, of whose character and talents honourable mention should be made. Better known in this country than even Pozzo di Borgo, he, like Pozzo di Borgo, has been gathered to his fathers, diminishing by his decease the number of those skilful diplomatic agents selected by Alexander, and subsequently employed by the present emperor, who, when trusting to his own judgment, has been invariably unfortunate in every choice he has yet made, of civil, military, or diplomatic servants.

Matutsewicz, as his name indicates, was a Pole from the province of Mazovia, the cradle of the Polish aristocracy. His father, if the author remembers right, was one of the ministers of the independent grand duchy of Warsaw. His son, the personage in question, belonged to the same dashing school of diplomacy as Tchornichef, the minister of war, before he abandoned that career. Eschewing the pedantry of his profession, under an appearance of frivolity he was a keen observer, and a sagacious politician. Many of his dispatches, written after a hard day's hunting, when those who had been his companions across the fields of Leicestershire, and at the table, had retired to rest, are said to be models of political penetration and lucid exposition.

The urbanity of his manners made him a general favourite, whilst his English tastes and habits rendered him peculiarly and deservedly popular in this country. He was considered to be the only foreigner who had ever shone in the field, and acknowledged even at Melton to be a crack rider.

His English predilections are said to have given umbrage to the emperor, and were carried so far, that, on returning to St. Petersburg, for the purpose of being surrounded by English people, he would take up his abode at an English boarding-house,

though the establishments of that description are of very secondary order in that city. His knowledge of the state of parties, and of public opinion in England, rendered his services, however, too valuable to be dispensed with by his sovereign.

Matutsewicz, like Pozzo di Borgo, was one of those men who, with a profound disgust for Russia, remained voluntarily more ignorant of its internal condition, than if employed by another court; but who, seduced by the attractions of wealth and station which were to be enjoyed out of it, consented to serve its cabinet, and who on account of their political ability and personal popularity—and considering how apt the public is to be influenced in its judgment of a distant state by the individuals representing it—were the most dangerous to the cause of freedom and civilisation who could possibly have been employed. So much so, that even the author of these volumes surprises himself yielding to a feeling of involuntary regret, at their removal from a scene in which they were playing a part so pernicious.

Diplomacy has been characterised as at best the art of deceiving foreign countries for the benefit of your own; but it is apt to resolve itself into the converse, of deceiving your own country for the benefit of

others. Its value, under any circumstances, to a powerful government, may be considered as more than questionable. Our naval officers have notoriously proved more successful in their negociations than the most skilful of our professional diplomatists. The labours of the latter, when employed on secret missions, with discretionary powers, by constitutional governments, seem, after failure in the visionary attempt at over-reaching foreign cabinets, to be chiefly directed to the mystification of the public at home.

Hence the governments of France and England have usually fared the worse in their disputes with the United States, which are often represented abroad by men of notorious inexperience or incapacity. This arises from the fact, that on every important question, the American diplomatists become virtually mere delegates, to the discretion of whom nothing is left by the exigencies of public opinion at home. We have witnessed both French and English ministries with might and right alike upon their side, give way before the difficulties of such a position, abandoning the national interests confided to them, because their maintenance might have endangered the stability of their tenure of office, or the reputation of the diplomatists who served them;

war, however inevitable, being to a man of that profession, what the death of the patient is to the doctor,—an assumed reflection on his skill. No doubt the time is rapidly approaching when the art of the diplomatist will become as obsolete as that of the astrologer; when, confident in the national power, and desirous only of impartial justice, our whole intercourse with foreign governments will be matter of publicity. In as far, however, as exceptions may be admitted to the general inutility of diplomacy, they apply unquestionably to its agency when employed by a cabinet like the Russian, and in some degree to the intercourse of a constitutional government with a despotism as absolute as that of Russia. The Russian empire looms gigantically in the distance, and intimidating the feeble, increases its dominion, influence, and power by the power it is supposed to possess. Its diplomacy is the mouth-piece by which this intimidation is conveyed,—the accompanying agency of corruption put into operation. It is by means of her indefatigable diplomatists that the opinion of Western Europe has during so many years been kept quiescent; for, if the Cabinet of St. Petersburg had in this respect shown as much apathy as the Ottoman Porte, leaving things to take their natural

course, the popular voice in France and England would long since have called urgently for that political crusade which public opinion in this country has long since commenced against negro slavery.

With respect to our own relations with a government, which, in the reign of the present emperor, may be considered as essentially personal, it is obvious that any impression produced upon the sovereign as individual, acquires an importance which it could under no other circumstances possess, and may hence be supposed to offer unusual chances of success to a diplomatist.

It should, however, be remembered, how great a distinction in every-day life, men of the most ordinary capacity make, between those with whom they transact business or whom they select for companionship; and how seldom in anything affecting their interests they allow themselves in the former case to be influenced by their predilection in the latter, whilst, on the other hand, there is more danger of the diplomatist being cajoled by the sovereign, than the sovereign by the diplomatist. This was evidenced in the case of Lord Durham. He was supposed to be sent over bristling with prejudice against the Russian cabinet, and bearing with him

the option of peace or war. He found an officer in simple uniform in his apartments, who stepped forward to introduce himself and give him welcome. It was the Emperor Nicholas, who continued to treat the plenipotentiary with a mingled urbanity and deference which was so flattering to his vanity that he soon sank from the proud position of a dreaded mediator, into that of a thorough-going partisan of the sovereign he had come to admonish. The emperor ordered reviews, and placed steamers and men-of-war at his disposal, and on his first demand, caused all the claims of all British subjects, which had been vainly advocated during years by the British legation, to be forthwith adjusted and discharged. By this means Lord Durham was so completely gained over and disarmed, that he desisted in the intercession he had come to make in favour of Poland, and in many other demands, which the fears of the Imperial cabinet would at that period have conceded to a more energetic mediator. The satisfaction felt by the British residents at the prompt, unexpected, and unprecedented settlements of their pecuniary claims, by rendering Lord Durham popular, not only saved his conduct from obloquy, but has caused that of subsequent legations to be most unfavourably contrasted with it.

Having no point to carry, the emperor has since turned a deaf ear to all reclamations in favour of the claims of British subjects, as undoubtedly he will continue to do till such time as an envoy is found obtuse or weak enough to barter, as Lord Durham, the interest of the country at large, for that of a few individuals.

The foreign diplomatists at the court of St. Petersburg, and the Russians themselves, were, however, far from entertaining as exalted an idea of Lord Durham as the English residents, who had profited by his exertions; and it was a common observation amongst them, that he had been outwitted by the emperor.

Prince Menchikof, the minister of marine, who, whether through design or imprudence, occasionally violates all the rules of military etiquette, to make confidential observations on the quarter-deck, was heard to say directly after the departure of Lord Durham, that he had come strutting like a turkey-cock, and gone away like a plucked goose. The occasion of this remark was particularly humiliating to the English engineer, in whose presence it was made, to the officers of the Russian steamer which had conveyed the English envoy to Stettin. It is customary for princes, ambassadors, and such person-

ages as receive this mark of favour, to give presents to the officers and crew; now those distributed by Lord Durham were very much below the average value of gifts ordinarily made by illustrious travellers.

The minister of marine, boarding the steamer on its return, enquired what donation had been made; such inquisitiveness, however unworthy of his station it may appear, being in Russia habitual to personages of a rank far more exalted than his own.

On examining them, with many expressions of disgust at the Englishman's meanness, he reproached the officers with accepting a gift so beggarly, and recommended them to throw the present into the water, a suggestion which was promptly complied with. Meanwhile, Lord Durham, a convert to the fitness of Russian institutions, was on his way to England, where he spoke shortly afterwards with considerable enthusiasm of that much maligned sovereign, the Emperor Nicholas.

After the mission of Lord Durham, it became naturally difficult for his successors, whom the emperor had no good reason for delighting to honour, to satisfy the English residents, whose claims and disputes with the authorities were again subject to the same chicanery and interminable formalities as

before ;—and hence, as it has been said, comparisons unjust and detrimental to the popularity of subsequent diplomatists have been constantly made by the commercial body, which constitutes ninety-nine hundredths of the British residents or visitors in Russia. Allowance made for this disadvantage, it may be affirmed that Great Britain, both as regards attention to the interests of its subjects, and the respect he inspired, has never been more creditably represented than by the Marquis of Clanricarde.

Great Britian and France, indeed, are the only two European countries whose legations may be considered as able to afford the remotest protection to the persons or interests of their respective subjects. The protection which our arrangements with the Russian cabinet affords to British subjects, in their persons and interests, is, however, far from being sufficient or complete, and calls loudly for interference for its increase, both because the Russian government, if pressed upon the matter, would probably concede the point, and because those who suffer from its insufficiency are not individuals residing in or visiting the Russian empire to gratify their curiosity or caprice, but in the utilitarian pursuit of commerce; being moreover, as often the case with our English seamen, forced visitants of the Russian shores.

In our ordinary intercourse with foreign states, we recognise their criminal law as affecting Englishmen whilst in their dominions, subject only to the supervision of our consular authorities, to ensure regularity of procedure. But notorious partiality or venality in the administration of justice, has led either to specific stipulations or to practical interference in such cases. Such has been the case in Portugal and in China, if the author's recollections serve him right.

Now, the unanimous evidence of all acquainted with the subject, goes to prove the utter and scandalous perversion of justice in Russia in every department, from that of the police, which is entrusted with more than the summary power of our magistracy, up to the highest tribunals. The criminal courts are so disgracefully venal and corrupt that it is perfectly possible to obtain the condemnation to capital punishment of a wholly innocent individual, as may be seen in the instance of the cripple given at page 82 of this volume. There is no judge whom popular report does not consider to be bought for a ten or even a five-pound note, in the absence of a counter bribe; and it is notorious that chenovniks (government officers) may be found to swear to anything for the value of three shillings.

Now, all a consul is empowered to do, is to see that no irregularity takes place in the trial. He cannot, however convinced of the fact, say to the judge, you are bribed, and your witnesses are all notoriously forsworn. By the evidence of half-a-dozen individuals holding the rank of commissioned officers, and by the decree of one of the highest judicial dignitaries, the most palpable iniquity may thus be committed, and an Englishman capitally punished in strict accordance with the laws of the land. It is only a year or two ago that an English sailor was knouted at Riga and condemned to Siberia for the alleged murder of a pilot. It is not meant to be asserted that he was not guilty, but simply that his condemnation afforded no proof of his being so. English sailors at Riga and at Cronstadt are often seen forced by the military police, with cane in hand, to sweep the streets in company with the lowest criminals, because found drunk in the streets. Now let any English residents, who having abandoned all mercantile connection with Russia, dare give evidence, be examined, and see whether they have not known numerous instances wherein the sailors have been seized by the police when perfectly sober, to pay off some grudge to the captain, or to extort a few copecks from themselves.

Until some special court be established in the sea-ports, in which the resident merchants or the consular authorities have a voice, the interference of the latter must always be incomplete; for, unless in the exercise of a direct right, in most cases it can only be made by reflection on the integrity of the authorities; and it must be remembered, that if a consul render himself too obnoxious to the government in whose dominions he is established, he runs the risk of expulsion, thereby debarring himself from such future limited interference as he might have been permitted, for the benefit of the subjects of his native flag.

The influence exercised by the representatives of Great Britain, both diplomatic and consular, is far greater than that enjoyed by those of France; constituting a difference which the French public would have every right to resent, and which may be defined as follows: An Englishman, though subject to much extortion and annoyance, is habitually treated more favourably than any other foreigner; a Frenchman, on the contrary, is exposed to pointed insult and ill treatment whenever he comes into collision with the government officials. The author is acquainted with two instances where Frenchmen have been brought

before the emperor's aide-de-camp, Kakoshkine, civil police master of St. Petersburg; in both of which, that functionary, on learning their country, condemned them without a hearing; observing in the one case,—"Ah! a Frenchman," and spitting on the ground to mark his contempt; in the other, addressing his victim, "Vous étés français, coquin, et marche!" "You are a Frenchman, a rascal, be off with you!" It is true that a Frenchman, as well as an Englishman, is ordinarily exempt from exile to Siberia, from forcible enlistment, and from the infliction of corporal punishment, though at all times liable to sudden expulsion from the empire. But, unhappily, the subjects of other European states enjoy no such immunity; and the Prussian cabinet in particular, which has so frequently duped the press of France and England by its pretensions to liberalism, has cruelly abandoned, and still daily abandons, its own citizens to the tender mercies of the Russian authorities.

It will readily be understood, that the artificial boundaries of continental states, when not marked by rivers or mountain chains, or strong distinctions of habit and language, which in fact never exist without the first-named adjuncts, become, with whatever se-

verity maintained, impotent, permanently to divide the populations living on each side of an imaginary line, which only treaties have defined. The inhabitants of one village will resort to another within stone's throw, though one may be situated within the Prussian or Austrian, the other in the Russian territory; and, without the employment of vast armies, it is impossible to prevent the peasant, in his neighbourly pursuits, from overstepping the limits of his field, because it happens to be the boundary of an empire.

Hence, excepting locally and temporarily, it has never been attempted, even by the most despotic governments, and especially on the frontiers of Russia, Prussia, and Austria; the inhabitants all speaking a common language, have so long carried on comparatively unrestricted intercourse with their immediate neighbours, that it may be considered now impossible entirely to prevent it.

The Emperor Nicholas, in his violent efforts to suppress smuggling,—which, by the way, has since considerably increased,—issued an order that all Prussians found on his territory should be sent to Siberia; and some hundreds have already been despatched thither, without remonstrance from the cabinet of Berlin, as the author has some reason to

believe; but at least, as the event proves, without effectual remonstrance.

It will excite no surprise after this abandonment of its own people, that Prussia, by renewal of the cartel, should play the jackal to Nicholas. It undertakes by this treaty to restore all fugitives from their prison-house in the Russian dominions; and though professing to exempt from this measure political offenders, this clause merely entails on the Russian authorities the formality of claiming them as civil criminals, which the law itself enables them to do, as it would even in Prussia, since every individual leaving the country without the permission of the authorities attested on his passport by their *visa*, becomes on that very account liable to criminal persecution.

The great want of deference shown, since the revolution of 1830, to France, which has no complicity of political interest like Austria and Prussia, with the Russian cabinet, is owing partly to the personal antipathy of the Emperor Nicholas to Louis Philippe, and partly to the undignified solicitude with which that sovereign has attempted to deprecate the angry feeling of the autocrat. Louis Philippe, by returning during years, like Bernadotte, with humility and respect, the contumely of the Tsar, may

have hoped, like Bernadotte, eventually to mollify his wrath; but whatever motive prompted him, whether want of spirit, or whether the determination to sacrifice even in a manner the most ungrateful, his private feelings to the pursuit of some great end,—still he would, probably, by the assumption of a firmer tone, long since have forced Nicholas to display that courtesy into which events are gradually forcing him to unbend; instead of compromising, as the king of the French has done, during sixteen years, the dignity of France, and the interests of its subjects, to effect that object.

There is, perhaps, no man existing, to whom the civilised world is more indebted than to Louis Philippe; and there is no living individual whose life is of as much importance to the best interests of humanity.

Undoubtedly the peace of Europe was long chiefly maintained through his firmness, moderation, and consummate wisdom. During subsequent years, it can scarce be doubted, that his death would have been the signal for its violation; whilst, perhaps, it yet depends, and may still for some years to come, hinge on the duration of a life which thus becomes unprecedentedly precious.

To all who watch the progress of public opinion

in France, innumerable signs conjoin to presage that the period is surely, if slowly approaching, when its people will feel their interests so identified with those of Great Britain, as to render any collision impossible between two countries, whose strife would be one of the greatest calamities which could afflict the human race. It is to be hoped that the national feeling may have already progressed so far towards this point, that the moderate and enlightened party which has gathered around him, will suffice, like an experienced crew, even if the pilot were lost, to guide into the desired haven, the vessel, which, without disparagement to his exertions, it must be remembered, that they have aided him in navigating through the storm. This tribute to the wisdom and genius of the King of the French, and to the beneficial action both of his conduct and of that of his party, the author may the more readily render, because without predilection for the private character of Louis Philippe, and without sympathy for the motives of those who have seconded his efforts.

It is rendered, judging both as public men should be judged, by their actions, which alone have any practical results for the public; whilst their motives and inspirations, which, however apparent,

must always be subject to some doubt, can only be taken into account in our estimation of their private character.

A few years back, the republican party contained, and probably the opposition—I mean that portion of the nation adverse to existing institutions, not the parliamentary opposition—still comprises in its misguided ranks, the vast majority of those animated by the most noble and generous impulses which move mankind to action.

The party now in the ascendancy, and virtually governing France, is not perhaps unjustly reproached by its adversaries, with being animated by the spirit of trade, in its narrowest acceptation. But at the same time that this party is solely guided by its selfish interests, it is enlightened enough to discern the true direction in which they lie, which happily chances to be that most conducive to the peace and civilisation of the world.

Its adversaries, as a body, are still in knowledge far behind the moderate party of France, and the average public of this country; whilst the warmth of national temperament, and the consequent vivacity of prejudice, would render necessary a far larger amount of knowledge, to prevent them from

abusing the possession of power, by entering on the course most detrimental to the eventual freedom and prosperity of their own and neighbouring countries.

This enlightenment, requisite to discern the true path to the attainment of the objects which it has in view, makes daily progress in this party, and consequently daily converts from that passion for war, hostility to England, and tendency (by which it has hitherto been distinguished) towards the adoption of extreme and unsafe theories, instead of tried and practical reforms.

When its views shall therefore have sufficiently expanded, there will be more to be expected from this portion of the nation than from that which now steers the right course, guided by its clear-sightedness, but impelled only by that narrow selfishness, which, whilst France had still slaves in its dominions, allowed it to haggle for a few thousand pounds proposed for their relief, and to become with open eyes the accomplice of those who, blinded by the enthusiasm of national prejudice, afford facilities to the slave-holder only in pursuance of their hostility to England. However much more of eventual promise there may therefore be in that portion of the French people which, in as far as represented

in the chambers, is designated as "left" and "extreme left," its exclusion since the revolution of July, from power, has undoubtedly hitherto been a blessing both to France and Europe; and whatever diversity of opinion there may be as to the precise share which Louis Philippe's genius may have had in conducing to this result, there is none as to the fact that it has been very large; and he is hence entitled to the gratitude, not only of his country, but of Europe at great. If its misapplication to Godoy, the intriguing traitor, had not brought the title into discredit, he might justly have been honoured as the Prince of Peace in an age which values pacific triumphs above the most brilliant achievements of the sword; and whatever the future bring forth, at least the sixteen years of his reign which have elapsed, will suffice to ensure him the renown in history of the most skilful and enlightened sovereign who has ever ruled over any realm. The author, in making the observation, can hardly be suspected of flattery, when adding (together with a few following observations) his belief, which no accompanying praise would qualify in the eyes of the court of the Tuilleries, that the King of the French, as the late Lady Newburgh contended, is the son and change-

ling of the Italian jailor and executioner, Chiappini.

It may be remembered that her ladyship was born in the same small town in the Apennines where the wife of the Duke of Orleans, who had never borne any but female children, was confined. The jailor quitted his occupation to bring his presumed daughter up in affluence. She grew up fair, and bearing a striking likeness to the Bourbons. Louis Philippe is dark, and in mind, person, and character, the very antipodes of that incapable and ill-fated race. In disposition he has shown, if not avarice, an insatiable avidity of gain, which is doubly inexcusable in the wealthiest individual in the world, and as endangering by its pertinacity the whole political fabric which he has so successfully and laboriously upreared. The private wealth of Louis Philippe, as estimated by one of the great capitalists of Europe, throws far into the shade the fortunes of the Arkwrights and the Rothschilds. Yet for the appanage of his sons, a paltry consideration to one of his means, he is constantly at issue with his ministry, endangering the stability of his dynasty, and the work of years.

In reviewing the past conduct of this sovereign with reference to the potentates of Eastern Europe, the peculiar position in which he was placed must

not be forgotten; and it should be borne in mind, that his first duty he owed to France, which, though powerful enough to have defied, if not to have mastered its continental neighbours, was still so difficult to preserve against internecine dangers, and to defend against itself. War would in every human probability have led to the triumph of a dangerous party in the state, to anarchy and to military despotism. To preserve France from these evils, he acted rather the part of a wise than of a generous man, whilst, besides, the part he was acting was not that of the man, but of the politician.

To secure the peace of France, he sacrificed all those who had a right to look to her for succour or protection, condescending even to take many humiliating steps for the purpose of ensuring towards the pacific policy of his cabinet, the forbearance of those oppressing them.

However inglorious such a part may appear when recorded, it is probably nevertheless true, that he thus pursued and accomplished all that was practical, and that any other course, without finally benefitting those whom he abandoned, would have compromised the liberties and well-being of the country over which he had been called to rule. If

painful and degrading sacrifices were necessary to propitiate the great continental powers, they were resolutely made in all their humiliation. The expulsion of Lelewel from France, and of the Polish exiles who had taken part in the expeditions of Zalivski and Konarski, are but slight illustrations of the length to which his cabinet went, to prove the sincerity of its pacific intentions, beside that afforded by the fact that the French police was in regular correspondence with the police of Prussia and of Russia; betraying to both the movements of the refugees, as was too ostentatiously evidenced to some of them by the police authorities of those countries on their arrest, and in a similar manner proved to others on their return, from the very mouth of Gisquet, the police prefect, when giving them the order to quit the French territory, to seek the refuge which other constitutional countries afforded. These, and other stains in the policy of Louis Philippe, may be excused in consideration of the difficulties with which he was surrounded, or in favour of the success with which he has attained a great object, which it was pardonable that he should pursue with extreme, or perhaps even with unscrupulous solicitude.

But times have since changed, without yet show-

ing that alteration in the policy of the King of the French which sixteen years of success would safely have allowed. France reposes now no longer on a volcano. The republican party has dwindled into comparative insignificance, unless it be recalled to life and vigour by the want of elasticity, or contractive tendency of that policy, and by the reaction which it may occasion. The great majority even in those opposed to his government and inimical to his dynasty, are disposed to admit both with certain modifications in the existing order of things. The general feeing of the country has grown decidedly constitutional, and may continue so, provided it be shown that the present state of government contains a safety-valve which may allow a gradual and pacific expansion to the dilating exigences of the public mind. France is now menaced by a danger diametrically opposed to that which threatened it in the earlier periods of the present reign. Thus far Louis Philippe has prevented retrogression, and ensured stabiiity ; but it is not enough for a people like the French to be stable, if at the same time stationary in an age when all things tend to progression; and if his powerful hand, which hitherto has so skilfully guided the engine of the state, be allowed to press so heavily on that safety-valve, the very strength

and energy which before were conducive to security, may, on the contrary, now occasion the explosion.

France, though saved from itself by having a king who not only reigned but governed, is now thereby impeded in its progress; and unless he govern in a much more liberal spirit, both as regards reform at home and his relations with foreign states abroad, the country will probably, as Thiers has recently expressed, grow dangerously impatient of such tutelage.

There is no longer now in prospective, anarchy at home as the consequence of dissent with neighbouring potentates; and the chief dangers which menace the popularity of Louis Philippe whilst he lives, and the stability of his dynasty after him, exist only in his complicity, or presumed connivance with those despotic states to which necessity once made him so subservient. The propagandism of constitutional governments and representative institutions, on the contrary, would not only avert the dangers to which the struggles of the victims of Russia, Prussia, and Austria may continually give rise, but identify the reigning family with a mode of government so much in accordance with the genius of the times, that eventually it cannot fail of universal extension.

Louis Philippe, of all men, has shown himself convinced of the benefit which must accrue to the prosperity of France, and to the security of his throne, from a cordial and permanent good understanding betwixt the country he governs and Great Britain. Now, in the whole cycle of political questions, there is perhaps only one on which the sympathies of the French and English people might be made to harmonise without giving rise to jealousies; and perhaps nothing but the emulation inspired by co-operation in such a cause would promptly effect that cordial fraternisation which otherwise must be the work of years, with all intervening chances of interruption.

That neutral ground on which the two nations may meet to inhume all lingering heart-burnings or animosities, is the question of intervention in favour of Poland, to procure for its wretched inhabitants those constitutional immunities solemnly guaranteed by treaties, of which the three powers have been the shameless violators; and of whose infringement, France and England, pledged to their maintenance, the apathetic witnesses.

It must be remembered that the Polish question differs from every other in this singular feature, that, though it may in general be regarded with selfish indifference by the majority, there can be

said to exist but one opinion upon it with the French and English public.

If we take the united press and representative assemblies of both countries, we cannot probably find more than one man, (the Marquis of Londonderry,) or two papers, (the *Presse* and the *Morning Post*,) which, in 1846, dare venture to express their sympathy with the oppressors of Poland.

Now, what intelligent Tory can lay his hand upon his heart, and declare that he would not consider as an advantage to his party, the secession of the noble marquis from its ranks? The *Presse* is, by the avowal of those connected with it, pensioned by Russia, and the *Morning Post* reported to be so; a rumour which the author cannot credit, believing as he does the Russian diplomatic agents to be far too well informed to imagine that the *Morning Post* could in any way influence the public opinion in favour of their government, unless indeed by writing against it.*

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* The hostility of both Lord Londonderry and the *Morning Post* to the Polish cause, is not quite motiveless.

His lordship, on the eve of his departure for St. Petersburg, as ambassador, was superseded in his appointment, on account of the strong feeling excited in the House of Commons by the indiscreet avowal on his part of sentiments towards the Poles, which would have been repudiated even by his brother, Lord Castlereagh, who actually brought a bill into an English House of Commons,

As regards Louis Philippe, though evidently a man to whose credit as a statesman it must be re-

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to make libel punishable by transportation, with death as the penalty of return; and who publicly, in a British parliament, plumed himself on waving the establishment of a censorship, which he had at first intended.

The *Morning Post* has sufficient reasons for identifying its opinions with those of the noble marquis, besides that of turning an honest penny by the tendency of its political *convictions*, as may be illustrated by the following receipt from its advertisement office:

THE MORNING POST.
Office, Wellington-street, Strand, (opposite the English Opera-house.)

No. of Adv.	Insertions.	March 29th, 1846.
	1	21s.

G. Coutts.

This advertisement refers to the notice of a ball about to be given for the benefit of the Polish exiles, in Willis's room, in the first week of June, 1846; and which appeared gratis in the columns of the *Times, Morning Chronicle, Globe, Sun, Daily News, Advertiser, Morning Herald, and Standard;* all of which papers refused to deduct a guinea from the slender fund destined to the relief of the necessitous exile, of the sick, the aged, and the stranger.

The Marquis of Londonderry—who has thus secured one panegyrist for his lucubrations—is, or was, connected by the ties of proprietorship with the *Morning Post.* He is, indeed, even suspected of contributing to its columns, where, at least, he must have many opportunities of confirming that species of knowledge with which they are ordinarily replete, derived from the housekeeper's room, the butler's pantry, or from direct observations in the porter's hall. Now, it might be interesting to know how much of that identical one-pound-one came to the share of the noble marquis as proprietor?

corded that he has sacrificed his personal predilections to his policy, (which hitherto has been identical with the weal of the state,) it is evident that he can feel none towards the Emperor Nicholas, who during years received all his advances with coldness and contempt, and his professions of amity with treachery.

On his accession to the throne, the king of the French wrote privately to the Emperor Nicholas, as follows:

*Letter from Louis Philippe to Nicholas.**

Sire and Brother (Monsieur mon frère),

I announce to your Majesty my accession to the throne, by the letter which General Athalin will present you with in my name; but I am desirous at the same time of speaking open-heartedly to your majesty on the consequences of the catastrophe which I sought so earnestly to avert.

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* *Lettre de Louis Philippe à Nicolas.*

Monsieur mon frère !

J'annonce mon avénement à la couronne à Votre Majesté, par la lettre que le général Athalin lui présentera en mon nom, mais j'ai besoin de lui parler, avec une entière confiance, sur les suites de la catastrophe, que j'aurais tant voulu prèvenir.

I had long seen cause to regret that King Charles and his government were not following a course more in accordance with the national wishes. I was, however, far from foreseeing the astounding occurrences which have just taken place. I had hoped that in the absence of that good faith in the spirit of the Charter, and of our institutions, which was wanting, that a little prudence and moderation would have sufficed to maintain the late government for a long time still as it was conducted.

Since the 8th of August 1829, the composition of the new ministry had, however, alarmed me. I saw how far those constituting it were odious and suspicious to the nation, and I consequently

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Il y avait longtemps que je regrettais que le roi Charles, et son gouvernment, ne suivissent pas une marche mieux calculée, pour répondre à l'attente, et au vœu de la nation. J'étais bien loin pourtant de prèvoir les prodigieux évènemens, qui viennent de se passer, et je croyais même qu'à défaut de cette allure franche, et loyale, dans l'esprit de la charte, et de nos institutions, qu'il était impossible, d'obtenir, il aurait suffi d'un peu de prudence, et de modération pour que ce gouvernment pût aller longtemps, comme il allait. Mais depuis le 8 Aout 1829, la nouvelle composition du nouveau ministère m'avait fort alarmé.

Je voyais à quel point, cette composition était odieuse, et suspecte à la nation, et je partageais l'inquiétude générale, sur les mésures que nous devions en attendre.

shared in the general anxiety felt as to the measures to be expected from such men.

Nevertheless, the popular attachment to law, and the love of order, have made so much progress in France, that resistance to the late ministry would have been confined to parliamentary opposition, if in its insanity that ministry had not given the fatal signal by the most audacious violation of the charter, and by the abolition of those guarantees of our national liberties in the defence of which there is no Frenchman who would not willingly shed his blood.

No excesses have followed this fearful struggle, but it was difficult that there should not result from it some convulsions in our social condition; and the same exaltation of the public mind which had preserved it from disorder, tended at the same

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Néamoins, l'attachment aux loix, l'amour de l'ordre, ont fait de tels progrès en France, que la resistance au ministère ne serait certainement pas sortie des voies parlementaires, si dans son délire ce ministère lui-même n'eut donné le fatal signal, par la plus audacieuse violation de la charte, et par l'abolition de toutes les guaranties de notre liberté nationale, pour lesquelles il n'est guère, de français, qui ne soit prêt à verser son sang. Aucun excès n'a suivi cette lutte terrible.

Mais il était difficile, qu'il n'en résultat pas quelque ébranlement, dans notre état social, et cette même exaltation des esprits

time to urge it to the trial of political theories which would have plunged France, and perhaps at the same time Europe, into terrible calamities.

It was under these circumstances that all eyes turned towards myself.

The vanquished party itself thought me necessary to its safety. I was perhaps still more so to the conquerors, that their victory might not degenerate. Setting on one side many personal considerations, which united to make me wish to decline it, I accepted this painful task because I felt that the slightest hesitation on my part might compromise the future fate of France, and the peace of its neighbours. The indecisive title of Lieutenant-General, conferred upon me, excited

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qui les avant detournés de tout désordre, les portait en même temps vers des essais de théorie politique qui aurait précipité la France, et peut-être l'Europe dans de terribles calamités. C'est dans cette situation, sire, que tous les yeux se sont tournés vers moi. Les vaincus eux-mêmes m'ont cru nécessaire à leur salut. Je l'étais encore plus, peut-être pour que les vainqueurs ne laissassent pas dégénerer la victoire. J'ai donc accepté cette tâche noble et penible, et j'ai écarté toutes les considerations personnelles qui se reunissaient pour me faire désirer d'en etre dispensé, parceque j'ai senti que la moindre hésitation, de ma part, pourrait compromettre l'avenir de la France, et le répos de tous nos voisins. Le titre de lieutenant-général, que laissait tout en question, excitait une confiance dangereuse, et il faillait se hâter,

fallacious hopes; and it became necessary to emerge from a provisional state, not only to inspire the confidence requisite, but to save that charter so important to preserve, which the late emperor, your august brother, so well appreciated, and which would have been in danger of perishing if the public mind had not been speedily satisfied and re-assured.

The exalted wisdom and extreme perspicacity of your majesty, cannot fail to perceive, that to attain that salutary end, it becomes desirable that the recent occurrences in Paris should be considered from a right point of view, and that Europe, doing justice to my motives, should accord to my government the confidence to which it is entitled. Let your majesty bear in mind, that as long as Charles X.

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de sortir de l'état provisoire, tant pour inspirer la confiance necessaire, que pour sauver cette charte, si precieuse à conserver, dont feu l'empereur, votre auguste frère, connaissait si bien l'importance, et qui aurait été très compromise, si on n'eut promptement satisfait, et rassuré les esprits.

Il n'échappera ni à la perspicacité de votre majesté, ni à sa haute sagesse, que pour atteindre ce but salutaire, il est bien désirable que les affaires de Paris soient envisagées, sous leur véritable aspect, et que l'Europe, rendant justice, aux motifs qui m'ont dirigé, entoure mon gouvernement de la confiance qu'il a droit d'inspirer. Que votre majesté veuille bien ne pas perdre de vue, que tant que le roi Charles X. a regné sur la

reigned over France, I was the most submissive and the most faithful of his subjects; and that it was only when I saw the action of the laws paralysed and the royal authority annihilated, that I thought it my duty to defer to the national wish, by accepting the crown which has been conferred upon me.

It is towards you, Sire, that the eyes of France are now directed. She delights to see in Russia her most powerful and natural ally. I hold a pledge, too, in the noble qualities which distinguish your imperial majesty, whom I pray to accept the assurance of the high esteem and inalienable friendship with which I am,

Sire and Brother, of your Imperial Majesty
the loving brother,
LOUIS PHILIPPE.

France, j'ai été le plus soumis et le plus fidèle de ses sujets, et que ce n'est qu'au moment ou j'ai vu l'action des lois paralisée, et l'exercice d'autorité royale totalement arréantie, que j'ai cru de mon devoir de déférer au vœu national, en acceptant la couronne, à laquelle j'ai été appèlé.

C'est sur vous, Sire, que la France a surtout les yeux fixés. Elle aime à voir dans la Russie, son allié le plus naturel, et le plus puissant. J'ai pour guarantie le noble caractère, et toutes les qualités que distingueur Votre Majesté Imperiale.

Je la prie d'agréer les assurances de la haute estime, et de l'inaliéable amitié avec laquelle je suis,

Monsieur mon frère de Votre Majesté Impériale le bon frère,
LOUIS PHILIPPE.

*Answer from the Emperor Nicholas to Louis Philippe.**

I have received from General Athalin the letter of which he was the bearer. Events, ever to be deplored, have placed your majesty in a cruel dilemma. You have taken a determination which appeared to you the only one which could save France from great calamities, and I can give no opinion as to the considerations by which your majesty has been influenced, but I entertain the hope that Divine Providence will bless the efforts you meditate in favour of the happiness of the French people.

In concert with my allies, I receive with pleasure the desire which your majesty expresses of maintaining peaceful and amicable relations with

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* *Lettre de Nicolas à Louis Philippe.*

J'ai reçu des mains du Général Athalin, la lettre dont il a été porteur. Des évènemens deplorables ont place votre majesté dans une cruelle alternative. Elle a pris une determination qui lui a paru la seule propre a sauver la France de grandes calamités, et je ne me prononcerais pas sur les considerations qui ont guide votre majesté, mas je forme des vœux pour que la Providence divine veuille benir les intentions et les efforts qu'elle va faire pour le bonheur du peuple français. De concert avec mes alliées, je ne plais a aceuiller le désir que votre majesté a exprîmé d'entretener des relations de paix et d'amitié avec tous les états d'Europe.

the states of Europe. So long as they are based on existing treaties, and on the firm determination of respecting the rights, obligations, and territorial possessions consecrated by them, Europe will find therein a pledge of peace, so necessary to the repose of France itself.

Called conjointly with my allies to cultivate with France these conservative relations, I shall for my own part use in them all the solicitude they require, and display towards your majesty that personal feeling which I beg leave to express in return for the sentiments which you have given me the assurance of entertaining towards me.

I pray your majesty to accept, &c. &c.

NICHOLAS.

Tant qu'elles seront basées sur les traités existants et sur la ferme volonté de respecter les droits et obligations, ainsi que l'état de possession territoriale qu'ils ont consacré, l'Europe y trouvera une garantie de paix si necessaire au répos de la France elle-même. Appelé conjointement avec mes alliés a cultiver avec la France ces relations conservatrices, j'y apporterai pour ma part toute la sollicitude quelles reclament, et les dispositions dont j'aime a offrir a votre majesté l'assurance en retour des sentimens quelle m'a exprîmes.

Je la prie d'agréer un même-temps, &c. &c.

NICOLAS.

If, with the letter of Louis Philippe, we compare the style and wording of the answer vouchsafed by Nicholas, nothing can be more contemptuous. He replies not only without reciprocating the "*Monsieur mon frère*," with which his royal correspondent commences his confidential effusion, but with an apparent equivocation even in the constrained civilities to which he condescends. Contempt and antipathy to the man he addresses, are scarcely glossed over; but at the same time he gives a distinct assurance of his pacific intentions with regard to France, so long as international rights, as based on established treaties, were respected. Even this Nicholas need not have done. The Prince of Monaco, with a territory six miles wide, refused to recognise Louis Philippe! so that assuredly the Russian autocrat, ruling over sixty millions, and divided from France by hundreds of intervening miles, might, as a matter of principle, have pursued the same course. He chose, however, to dissimulate, and to declare pacific intentions whilst preparing a crusade against the revolution of 1830; an attempt which was frustrated by the breaking out of the Polish revolution; though the premiditation of war with France was proved beyond all doubt by the seizure of state

papers at Warsaw, in the portfolio of the Grand-duke Constantine; and in particular by the finance minister Lubecki's reply to the Emperor Nicholas, produced before the French Chambers on the 22nd of March 1831, by Lafayette; wherein he acknowledged the receipt of orders to hold funds disposable for enabling the Russo-Polish army to march westwards, and stated that he held at the imperial disposal eight millions of Polish florins in the treasury, and a million dollars in the bank of Berlin.

It is true that this treachery towards Louis Philippe, whom he treated so cavalierly, could scarcely be held so personal as the tone of his answer; since the same seizure of letters brought to light as much evidence of imperial duplicity towards the Austrian cabinet, in the shape of a military plan for the invasion and occupation of Hungary, drawn up by lieutenant-colonel Prodzinski, at the express command of the emperor's brother. The Polish revolution put an end to all thoughts of aggression against France, both at that time and up to the present hour; but the answer which has just been cited was not the last as well as first of the humiliations to which Louis Philippe was subject in his intercourse with the autocrat.

During years the Emperor Nicholas has heaped

upon him and his representatives every species of diplomatic slight and contumely, which were met, as it has been already shown, with unwearying patience; creditable, no doubt, to the judgment and forbearance of the French king, so long as endured rather than endanger the growth of the still insufficiently rooted constitutional system on which he had upreared his throne.

But the continuation of that subserviency which is now no longer a political necessity, would indicate not only a very different feeling to that which has been supposed to have hitherto actuated Louis Philippe, but furthermore, a lamentable departure from the sagacity and foresight by which his conduct is believed to have been dictated.

If moderate and enlightened men have seen cause to deny to that sovereign the meed of being solely moved by sentiments of exalted and self-denying public virtue, at least they had given him credit for that sort of integrity which nurtures the uprightness of private life by the forcible appeal to

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* Incredible as the conventionalities of the west may render it, on one occasion Nicholas so far gave way to his antipathy as to express himself before several persons,—"Ce cochon Louis Philippe;"—a fact known in every drawing-room in St. Petersburg, and of which that sovereign's ambassador was not ignorant.

human interests contained in the homely maxim, that "honesty is the best policy."

A given amount of benevolence, and the wisdom derived by a powerful intellect from long and varied experience of life in all its phases, were supposed to have led him to the conclusion that he might pursue a career alike beneficial to himself, his family, and the millions of the French people, of whose destiny, his birth, antecedents, and talents concurred to make him arbiter.

He would, it was supposed, have foreseen that a distribution amongst the governed, of the utmost liberty consistent with social order, and an incessant furtherance of their interests, would have given the only possible stability to his throne and dynasty, and hence have been led to identify the security of both with the growing liberality of national institutions, and progressive well-being of the people.

Until recently, whatever the prejudice of opponents, or the voice of faction may have urged against him, and however often he may have found it necessary to diverge for a few steps into another path; there was every reason to believe that this was his ultimate object. Of late, however, there have been signs in his conduct of a contrary tendency. He appears anxious now voluntarily to cultivate relations of amity

with the despotic cabinets, utterly irreconcilable with the character he has hitherto enjoyed. Legitimacy of government, in the language of absolute states,—and indeed of legitimatists of all descriptions,—can only signify, the sanctification of power by its possession for a certain period; since there is no reigning family, and no form of government whatever, in existence, which did not originally usurp the place of some other.

Now sixteen years of uninterrupted success have given to Louis Philippe, once under the ban of advocates of the right divine, a semi-legitimate title, just as Napoleon's intermarriage with a daughter of the Austrian emperor hallowed the imperial sceptre into which the victorious soldier chose to convert his sword. Now it might be difficult to conceive it possible, that a man who had displayed the political sagacity of Louis Philippe, should dream of repudiating, however tacitly, the solid title derived from the free choice of the people—that title, by which, for two centuries, the royal family of England has reigned over it,—for the sake of substituting therefor the questionable rights of those legitimate sovereigns who are tottering in their worm-eaten and barbaric thrones. Such a suspicion would be inadmissible, such a fear ridiculous,

if we did not know from the experience of recent history, that the most exalted genius, whether overstrained by its exertions, or whether through inherent susceptibility of certain vulgar temptations, yields to them, to its own destruction.

Napoleon, with all the moral force he derived from being the tamer of kings,—the humbler of ancient dynasties,—the child of that revolution which had impressed the world by contemning all it had looked upon with awe, and overturning all it had considered strong and terrible;—Napoleon abdicated all the advantages and prestige with which this character invested him, to assume, from his connection with the Austrian Cæsars, a few rags from their imperial mantle, which his heel had trampled in the dust.

The genius of Napoleon was constructive and destructive, the latter tendency predominating; that of Louis Philippe is conservative; and though his talents in their kind may be worthy of comparison with those of the Corsican, it can hardly be contended, that if the latter succumbed to the vulgar temptation of exchanging antagonism for companionship with legitimate princes, that the king of the French is to be held beyond the influence of so ignoble an ambition.

At home he has recently not been acting in that liberal spirit which his partisans once augured would guide his actions, as soon as he should have steered the vessel of the state out of immediate peril. France imperatively requires commercial and political reform. With a population exceeding that of Great Britain by seven millions, it has not one quarter the number of electors;—the only plea, in a country in which equality is the soul of every institution, for this restriction of the suffrage, is the ignorance of the masses;—but what has seriously been done to enlighten these masses? and, if anything, why is not the suffrage proportionately extended?

On commercial questions, Louis Philippe is undoubtedly aware of the advantages of a more liberal tariff to France, and of the eventual triumph there, as in all free countries, of free trade; but these sentiments he dare not avow, for fear of offending those monopolists who once were instrumental in upholding his dynasty, and maintaining peace for the purpose of advancing their own private ends; and whom, their support being now no longer indispensable, he should consequently sacrifice to the weal of that majority, for whose advantage he has been intrusted with his present power.

At home, therefore, it seems as if a narrow expediency now prompted the conduct of the man who was once supposed to be actuated by the far-seeing sagacity of the statesman. In his relations with foreign states we are shocked to find him ostentatious of sympathy with the legitimate despotisms of Eastern Europe—to find his police in 1846, (the same as when directed by Gisquet,) in connivance with the murderers of the Minsk nuns, and his minister and mouth-piece, Guizot, fathering in the French chamber the lies, and palliating the conduct of that Austrian cabinet, which with three hundred thousand soldiers at its command, hounded on a barbarous rabble to massacre men, women, and children in Gallicia.

Let us, however, hope that in these signs we are deceived. The right path and the wrong still lies open to that monarch, though it be impossible to pursue them both, or to tread a profitable course between.

He must soon choose between linking his name, fame, and prospects with the tottering cause of absolute sovereigns, who, if successful, would never pardon him ;—he must choose between being stigmatised as onewhom the blood of the executioner and jailor, his reputed father, led to play the jailor's and the

executioner's part—he must choose between this and the applause of all good and enlightened men, and the gratitude of whole nations; and he must bear in mind, that by this latter choice would be secured both his personal safety and the stability of his dynasty; while he should equally remember, that the last step which he or his family, if expulsed, might make to descend from the French throne, would be the first to ascend the scaffold on which the Duke of Orleans perished.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRUSSIAN KINGDOM.

The Prussian kingdom, the third of these great continental despotisms, is perhaps the most remarkable monument which has ever existed of human ingenuity—not ingenuity of a humane or beneficial kind—but of that nature which is sometimes evinced as well in the construction of a prison-wall as in the erection of an hospital or asylum.

The materials out of which this singular state has been constructed are as incohesive as the sands in the midst of which its capital is built; and it has no more permanent solidity of foundation than an edifice reared upon them.

Liable, from the topographical disposition of its territory, to be lost or won in a couple of battles, it is defended by a population, which organisation has rendered military, and nature made unwarlike;

which, during a century past, has been engaged in numerous wars, and whose every man is a drilled and pipeclayed soldier, but of which the army is so little efficient in a serious struggle, that, excepting against other Germans, the writer cannot recall four battles in a century won by the Prussian arms, unaided, against foreigners, to match a hundred disasters in the field.

This heterogeneous population is, moreover, disaffected on its eastern and western extremities, (in Posen, Silesia, and the Rhenish provinces,) and indifferent in the centre of the kingdom.

From such elements the Prussian state has been chiefly collected by the thrift of two princes, and by the policy and talents of Frederick the Great, perhaps the most consummate captain of times ancient or modern. Since his decease, a few bold and skilful ministers, and far more the continuous employment of statesmen above the ordinary average of mediocrity, has conduced to its prosperity, through the minute and intelligent attention they have paid to every branch of the public service. It would be difficult to conceive a series of minute regulations ostensibly better framed, for the direction of every department, civil, military, and judicial. But the very minuteness and universality of these regulations prevents the people from taking

one single step alone; and though these may originally have been instituted with a view to the national prosperity, this has nevertheless been unhesitatingly sacrificed wherever interfering with the paramount interests of the sovereign; and with those supposed interests of despotism, unluckily it happens that the well-being of the people is nearly always irreconcileable.

Governed, therefore, by an arbitrary system, whilst its northern and western frontiers abut upon, or are only divided by the sea from constitutionally governed France, Belgium, Holland, England, and Sweden, there would be cause to wonder alike at the comparative popularity of its cabinet in those countries, and at the preservation of its existence during the last five-and-thirty years, if we neglected to take into account the fact that it has perseveringly and diligently pursued a double course of fraud, both towards its own subjects at home, and towards the public of those foreign nations whose opinion might have re-acted on the people of Prussia.

Thirty-five years of broken promises have thoroughly disabused its own subjects, though strangers are only now beginning to discover that the kingdom of Prussia, its sovereign, and the character which

his government assumes, are from beginning to end the embodiment or the personification of one continuous falsehood. It is not long since we commonly heard Prussia cited as pre-eminently distinguished by the patriotic feeling, warlike organisation, material comfort, and intellectual tendencies of its population, fostered by a system of education so complete as to have captivated even the imagination of Lord John Russell.

The Prussian government was described, whether as an enlightened despotism, or a practically limited monarchy, still as permitting more freedom to the governed than was allowed by the tyranny of popular opinion in more liberally constituted states, whilst the conduct of the Prussian princes was ostentatiously set forth as a series of political acts the most enlightened and patriotic. We are told by grave authorities, as the highest praise they can bestow, that these monarchs have humbled the power of the nobility; that in Prussian Poland (the grand duchy of Posen) they have freed the peasantry from personal servitude; that they were instrumental in procuring constitutional institutions for the German states possessing them; that wherever local prejudices will allow, (that is to say in the western provinces,) they have established the Na-

poleon Code; and that they have given education to every man, and placed arms in the hands of every citizen,—the surest guarantee against any abuse of their supreme authority.

To read the animadversions contained in those papers which are recognised organs of the government, and to listen to the sneers of writers and professors at the want of liberality of the institutions of Great Britain and France, it is difficult not to conclude that, due allowance made for national prejudice, still the rule of Prussia, vaunted as so much more enlightened and free, must at least bear a close resemblance to constitutional countries.

Of all these assumptions, nothing is true excepting that the Prussian government has levelled aristocracy, and was the means of procuring constitutions for sundry states of the Germanic confederation.

In the abolition of aristocracy, it followed only the instincts of every despotism when it becomes ripe and strong enough. There is no aristocracy in the despotic countries of the East; there is none in China, nor in Russia; but it is replaced by a bureaucracy far more oppressive; and this has been in Prussia substituted for it.

It is readily to be conceived how meritorious may be despoiling one set of men of their privileges for the benefit of the community, as happened with the abolition of the feudal distinctions lingering from the middle ages; when all ranks were submitted to the same laws and taxation, and when every immunity of which the privileged orders were deprived, was added to the sum of the liberties of the people.

This has been the case in Western, but not in Eastern Europe, where, consequently, the question assumes a very different aspect. There, in fact, the excessive privileges of aristocracy have been suppressed, not to divide amongst the whole people rights monopolised by a class, but only to confiscate them for the benefit of despotism. Thus, for instance,—to deprive the lord of the right to strike the peasant is an undoubted benefit to society, but to take from the lord himself his privilege of exemption from corporal punishment, as was done with the great bulk of the Polish nobility abolished by a stroke of the pen of Nicholas, was only to render the whole, instead of a portion, of the nation liable to the lash. This may be taken as an apt illustration of the general benefit to the community, of those reforms in absolute states which are commonly hailed by free countries as the dawn of a

happier state of things; and it applies, though in a less degree, to Prussia, as well as to Austria and Russia.

As regards the intercession of Prussia with the diet, subsequently to 1814, in favour of representative institutions; though these were mainly obtained through her influence, that same influence was afterwards successfully devoted to rendering the constitutions it had obtained for its protégés, a dead-letter; and its cabinet, which promised five-and-thirty years ago a similar boon to its people, is still only promising it. Prussia at that period was emulating the policy of the Emperor Alexander, described in the first volume of this work, when he conceived the hope of reuniting the scattered fragments of Poland under his sceptre, by setting himself up as its protector, and making an ostentatious parade of liberalism. The Prussian cabinet appears about the same period to have conceived the idea of playing towards the German states, the same part as Alexander did towards Poland, endeavouring by its popularity to gain an ascendancy of influence over Austria.

Prussia long succeeded in imposing a belief in its liberality—so easy when in competition with a state like Austria,—both to foreigners, to the Ger-

manic states, and for some time even to its own subjects.

At home, and with its neighbours, these pretensions have been, however, for some time regarded as preposterously unfounded. Their admission in the face of facts, for so long a period, and their dissemination abroad, is, however, mainly due to the peculiar nature of the agents which Prussia has employed. In some governments, military, financial, or oratorical talent; in others the qualification of aristocratic or monied influence, have predominated; but that of Prussia has for many years been carried on by schoolmasters and pedants. Whilst treating the governed in the true spirit of pedagogues, these men have discerned the utility, and impressed upon royalty, the vast importance of propitiating public opinion. This has been attempted rather by deception than by deserving its encomiums. To the foregoing effect, it has endeavoured to buy up every man in Germany who had acquired a certain credit with the adverse party; and, alas for Germany, until a recent period, its most energetic patriots were not proof against a trumpery ribbon and a miserable pension. Furthermore, not content with the abandonment of their principles and the flattery of their employer, to which they resort, these men

heighten this flattery by incessantly contrasting with the Prussian government the free institutions of constitutional countries, which they vilify and calumniate in the comparison.

Let us now examine the other allegations, which are all essentially at variance with the truth.

The patriotic feeling of the Prussian people, which these hireling writers din into the ears of Europe, till it believes it to be a reality as imposing as this feeling in Spain, France, the United States, or England, has no existence anywhere, but in their pages, or in the mouths of Prussian *employés*. At least it is not any more compatible with the indifference of the Saxon or Pomeranian, than with the aversion which mingles with the indifference of the Posnanian, Silesian, and Rhinelander.

As regards the dissemination of education, it is true that the Prussian government has taught a large proportion of its subjects to read; but what is the use of teaching a population to read, when it withholds books and newspapers so strictly from them, that to the author's certain knowledge, even the *Times* newspaper has been excluded from the Prussian dominions within the last three years.

It is true that at one time or other it places arms in the hands of every able-bodied man, but as

these men are denied a free press, divested of political instruction, and restrained from anything approaching to political discussion, it is difficult to see why Prussia runs more risk from putting arms into the hands of those men, than Russia and Austria from the embodiment of still larger armies; and consequently how it should prove any check upon the arbitrary character of the government. Nor does it. The kingdom of Prussia is an absolutism, governed with a very varying rigour in its different parts; and a scale of diminishing severity might be established, if we take its territory circle by circle, from the Russian frontier to the Rhine. The Rhenish provinces being also the wealthiest in the kingdom, present, therefore, a singularly favourable sample, both of the material prosperity, and liberality of administration in Prussia, which is frequently judged from the standard of this district, chiefly visited by strangers. But even in the Rhenish provinces, no one can either be christened, brought up, live, or be buried, without the interference of that bureaucracy, with its complex regulations, which has flourished for ages in all its glory in China, and having attained a rapid growth in the contiguous Russian empire, has taken vigorous root in the proximate state of Prussia; being

apparently transmitted, like the cholera, westward from the far east, diminishing in energy as it travels, though still abundantly pernicious. Under the rule of the enlightened government of Prussia, a child could not have been christened by such names as Lytton Bulwer or Sidney Smith; the authorities objecting to patronymics as christian names; whatever agreement may have been made between its parents, it must be brought up, if a male, in the religion of the father; and when it dies, whether in infancy or manhood, it must be buried in a coffin of the government regulation size.

It is not true, that the abolition of slavery in Prussian Poland was effected by Prussia. At the first partition of Poland, the King of Prussia, as well as the Emperor of Austria, declared the emancipation of the peasantry, but a prior declaration to the same effect had been made by the quatrennial diet of independent Poland, prior to its dismemberment. Effectually, it can only be considered to have taken place when that portion of the country now belonging to Prussia was wrested from it and incorporated with the grand duchy of Warsaw, erected by Napoleon. Neither is it true that anything has been done by the Prussian cabinet to perfect the distribution of justice. A

code worthy of the middle ages is far from incorruptibly administered over the greatest part of its dominions, whilst in the Rhenish provinces, where a modification of the Code Napoleon is still in use, the government has made several attempts to deprive the inhabitants of it. As regards the material prosperity of Prussia, if we except the Rhenish provinces, its population is chiefly fed on potatoes and rye, and almost a stranger to the enjoyment of any luxury, excepting an immoderate indulgence in spirits, the chief comfort of a miserable peasantry. All that it has yet proposed whereby practically to benefit its subjects, is still to be put into execution. Prussia, in fact, is essentially the political land of promise. In 1808, the late king and his minister Von Stein, when they wanted the people, which was not dreaming then of liberal institutions, promised it a constitution. Already in its manifestoes to the nation, it began to sneer at the institutions of free countries, as its hirelings still continue to do.

"The representation of the people, in countries where it has existed till the present, is imperfect," said the Prussian minister, who then went on to promise all that he would do for the liberties of his fellow-subjects.

In 1811, Hardenberg, another minister, renewed these promises, and even convoked a provisional national representation at Berlin.

In 1815, the late king distinctly promised, in an ordinance dated the 2nd of May, to establish a house of representatives, whose sphere of action should extend "to all that concerns legislation and public taxation." By the 7th article of this same ordinance, the assembly of the national representatives was fixed for the first of September, 1815.

Thirty-one years have since elapsed; and the constitution which was then to be given in four months, is now (in April 1846) still postponed for nine months more, that is to say, till January 1817.

If, therefore, we have positive proof that these four months mean thirty-one years, by the rule of proportion we may infer, that the nine months now avowed portend a delay of sixty-nine years and three-quarters more, before the inhabitants of Prussia (for there is no such thing as a Prussian people) are allowed to enjoy the benefits of a representative form of government.

Promises, however, have not meanwhile been wanting. In 1820 it was declared by a cabinet order, that no fresh loan should be contracted without the sanction and concurrence of that na-

tional representation which at the present period, six-and-twenty years afterwards, is yet without existence.

In 1823, the provincial estates were convened to act expressly only until the establishment of a national representation. This action consisted in giving their advice whenever the king chose to ask it, on the subject of laws and taxation, though he reserved to himself, and exercised the right, of making laws, without giving them the opportunity of expressing their disapprobation, or of attending to their remonstrance when he did give them an opportunity of making it.

In 1837, the provincial estates, who by the ordinance instituting them, were to be consulted on all laws, and to have a right to complain of their grievances, addressed a very humble memorial to the king, in which, far from asking for a constitution, they modestly confined themselves to a prayer, that he would observe the terms of the ordinance by which they had been instituted; complaining that their advice was never asked, and that the right of petition had been surrounded by so many formalities as to be deprived of all practical existence.

The new sovereign, Frederick William the Fourth, the same who now rules over Prussia, had

on his accession, only a similar moderate request to answer. He appeared shocked in his reply, that his subjects should ask of him so little,—it was, in other words, to the following effect:—"My dear friends! you are too moderate by half; I am really hurt that you should show so little confidence in my magnanimity. You only ask me to remove the regulations which render the provincial estates a dead letter; but I propose to give you a constitution—an equal right with myself in making laws and imposing taxation, instead of the empty privilege which you demand, of advising me upon the subject, or complaining of their inconvenient action only; whilst I am about it you shall have one worthy of the cogitations of a cabinet of professors, and which will put to shame the representative systems of France and England; but you must wait a few months till I give it the last finishing touch."

Six years more have elapsed, and this famous constitution is still being perfected. Sometimes indeed a year or two pass over and we hear no more of it than of the kraaken or the great sea-serpent, but like those wonders the promise is then periodically revived in the official and semi-official papers. This announcement is usually elicited by some

liberal movement in Germany, if that can be called movement which is confined to the motion of the tongue, and sometimes of the goose-quill.

At other times, the same announcement is called forth by any act of the neighbouring German governments which occasions locally or temporarily any symptom of that popularity which Prussia seeks to monopolise in Germany.

In short, like Mrs. Cluppins, the witness in the famous trial of Bardell *versus* Pickwick, "who sits with her finger upon the spring of her umbrella, as if ready to put it up at a minute's warning," so Frederick William the Fourth has evidently a constitution all ready for promulgation on any requisite emergency.

That events will force him to this step is the belief of the author, but one which is no longer shared by his own subjects, who have come to regard him in the light of a thorough political Jeremy Diddler. This result will, however, never be brought about whilst the Prussian monarch can succeed in palming himself on the public of free states as a liberal and enlightened prince. Nothing but the fear of public opinion in Prussia and in Germany will effectually drive him to fulfil his promises; and this opinion is so timidly dependent on that ex-

pressed in foreign countries, that its voice will hardly be raised with sufficient energy whilst Frederick William is lauded by his French and English friends, and so long as no one thinks it worth while to reverse the picture.

There are both public men and certain of the organs of public opinion in this country, who, without being exactly deceived as to the conduct of his Prussian majesty up to this moment, still, when they see him hesitating between dread of the danger of retaining absolute power, consciousness of the advantages to be derived from its abandonment, and an unconquerable reluctance to relinquish it, imagine that, by encouragement and judicious praise, he may be induced to pluck up resolution for the irrevocable act. They are like the nurse who to induce an obstinate child to let itself be washed, calls it a dear little obedient boy, who is sure that master Willy will do as his mamma wishes him, and who finds the little urchin only the more sturdy in his resistance.

This plan, which may tell well on a more emulative disposition, has signally failed during six years with Frederick William; and it consequently now becomes time to try whether unmasking him to the world will not have a happier effect; a task to which a pen no less persevering, and far more able

than that of the author, will soon be devoted unceasingly, until that sovereign judges fit to fulfil his promises, and to redeem by this fulfilment the stigma of royal humbug which a patient exposition of his past conduct cannot fail to fix upon his character in the estimation of the world.

The King of Prussia has, in the main, closely followed the policy traditional for five-and-thirty years in the Prussian cabinet; wanting as much in intellect to have struck out a better, as in moral courage to have entered on another path. This policy has been to play fast and loose between absolutism and liberalism; keeping its despotic neighbours in check by the one, its constitutional neighbours by the other. At the time there may have been much ingenuity in this conception; but the wisest of political maxims derive their value only from present aptitude to ever changing circumstances. The liberal aspirations of the Prussian government were a host whilst they still obtained credence, but as that credence diminishes they are becoming yearly valueless as assignats of the old French republic; and hence his majesty, whilst depending on the old adage of "two strings to his bow," may find that he has lost sight of the possibility of falling to the ground between two chairs.

There is, whatever the flatterers of this prince may say, nothing in his antecedents to induce the belief that he is doing any violence to his own feelings by following in the footsteps of his father.

A short time previous to his accession to the throne, when most ostentatious of his liberalism, on the occasion of his visiting the Rhenish provinces, he was waited on at Dusseldorf, in the name of the Jewish community, by a Mr. Scheier, a man highly respected in that city, and brother of the banker of that name. Mr. Scheier was deputed by his co-religionaries respectfully to solicit the intercession and interest of the prince-royal in favour of the removal of the painful disabilities under which they laboured, and which to this day in Prussia can only be compared to those imposed on the Jews in England in the middle ages.

The heir-apparent, judging, no doubt, that he might at once give way to his arbitrary temper, and at the same time gratify the narrow-minded prejudice of his people, received the deputation with insult; and in reply to their petition, bade Mr. Scheier retire, by the use of an expression which will not bear literal translation; but which is rather more offensive than "Begone fellow!" (*mach't dasz ihr fort kommt.*) Mr. Scheier, who expected at

least sympathy and promises from the prince, at that time in opposition to his father on account of the liberal sentiments he was then professing, retired with tears in his eyes.

No sooner had the prince-royal ascended the throne, than he proved his religious and political intolerance in his contest with the Archbishop of Cologne. The substance of their quarrel, in which so much ink was shed, and which finally alienated the affection of the Roman Catholic population of the Rhenish provinces, is briefly as follows.

The King of Prussia's Lutheran subjects are, perhaps, the most lukewarm Protestants in Europe ; his Rhenish Roman Catholic subjects, the most bigotted in Christendom, as the recent exhibition of the holy coat at Treves may testify. The well-authenticated prostrations of thousands, and the pious apostrophes entreating the intercession of the holy coat, would now be scouted by the most devout of Roman Catholics in the remotest villages of Spain or Portugal.

The result of bigotry and indifference in that incessant juxtaposition inevitable with a mixed population of the two creeds, was obvious. In all marriages between Roman Catholics and Protestants, it was found that a stipulation was made that all the chil-

dren both male and female should be brought up in the former faith. It is probable that Roman Catholics were forbidden by their clergy to contract marriage with Protestants, excepting under such conditions; eventually the Archbishop of Cologne avowedly prohibited it; whether before or after the provocation of royal secular interference is of little moment. This state of things may be (according to the religious opinions of the reader) to be deplored, or matter of congratulation; but it was obvious that interference of any but a spiritual nature to arrest this proselytism would not only have been unworthy of any civilised government, but furthermore ineffectual, or detrimental to the effect sought to be produced. The King of Prussia found, however, in this circumstance, the opportunity of proving either his arbitrary temper, or a bigotry which made him worthy of ruling over so bigotted a population as furnished its hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to the holy coat.

He attempted to counteract the influeuce derived by the Romish church from the zeal of its votaries, by a clumsy and tyrannical law, entailing penal consequences. In England, if the followers of Joanna Southcote chose only to intermarry with communi-

cants of the church of England on the condition of the issue of such marriage being brought up in the Southcotian faith, what would be said if an act of parliament were passed to interfere with such an arrangement? The church might, indeed, retaliate upon such sectarian intolerance, by forbidding its communicants to intermarry with Southcotians, unless the children were agreed to be brought up in the church of England faith; or it might altogether prohibit such marriages. This would be redressing a spiritual wrong by a spiritual remedy, but the interference of secular law, with the appeal to material force and physical coercion, which it must entail, would be so gross a violation of liberty of conscience, as to be (except in Prussia) unparalleled in any Christian country out of Russia, in the age in which we live.

This appeal, however, Frederick William did not hesitate to make. Instead of attempting to counteract, through the agency of the Lutheran clergy, what he considered the sinister influence of the Roman Catholic clergy on the Lutheran congregations, he at once exerted his temporal authority, and finally imprisoned the Roman Catholic archbishop; thus rendering an obstinate old man

a holy martyr in the public estimation, converting an apathetic into a disaffected population, and bigots into fanatics.

The King of Prussia subsequently visited England; he saw and lauded the effects of our liberal institutions, he visited Newgate, prayed in its chapel, and took philanthropic tea and toast with the worthy Mrs. Fry.

On his return, of all that he had seen during his visit, the only thing he has shown himself inclined to transplant into his hereditary dominions, has been the forms and constitution of our established church.

Leaving its doctrines out of the question, there are, probably, few who will deny that these, if admissible with a people so wealthy and essentially so aristocratic, and so devoutly inclined as the English, are wholly unsuited to most other nations, but of all others, egregiously inapplicable to that mixture of homely simplicity and philosophic indifference which constitutes Prussian Lutheranism.

He did not, either from the holy inspirations he received when kneeling beside the quaker lady, nor from the example of Queen Victoria, nor from that of Louis Philippe, (of which he could not have been

ignorant,) learn, when the assassin's pistol was levelled at him, that the noblest prerogative of kingly power is mercy; but exacting his pound of flesh, he signed the death-warrant of Tchech, and took in retaliation for the intent to kill, that forfeit life which Queen Victoria spared in the case of Oxford, and which Louis Philippe refused to take when he found that the blood of Alibaud had not deterred Meunier from a deed of blood; a fact which his Prussian majesty would have done well to remember, bearing furthermore in mind how much more imperatively the case of Meunier called for the punishment of death, if such were any example, instead of being a mere act of individual vengeance; since Meunier's motive in seeking to destroy a man by whose life hung the destiny of a nation, was political; his attempt, the execution of many homicidal wishes; whilst Tchech's attempt to shoot a sovereign too common-place for any one to be interested in his individual death, was merely prompted by an isolated mania.

It is Frederick William who has proposed to substitute the barbarous law of Prussia Proper in the Rhenish provinces for the Napoleon code; an attempt which cannot be said to be abandoned,

though he has been deterred from it by the strong disapprobation manifested, and the proximity of these districts to the French frontier.

It was Frederick William who renewed the cartel with Russia, so odious to his subjects; and by which it has been shown that he virtually delivers up to the Russian authorities the fugitives from unendurable religious and political persecution. The treacherous and cruel policy of the Prussian cabinet which he has adopted towards the Poles is not sufficiently known in Western Europe; the truth having been on the one hand parried by the hireling Prussian writers, whilst on the other the indignation of the sufferers has been merged in the recollection of Russian atrocities, and silenced by contemplation of the hopeless despotisms of Russia and Austria. Unhappily the conduct of Prussia towards these unfortunates is less measured now than after the revolution of 1830, when France was threatening, and visions of another Jena were flitting before the royal eyes. Let us briefly examine what it was, then, to be enabled to judge somewhat of its present duplicity and cruelty. As an example of the former, the author selects the following out of a mass of evidence, chiefly because the testimony of a refugee resident in England.

"To the author of 'Revelations of Russia."

"My dear Sir,

"In answer to your inquiries, I beg leave to state that you have been quite correctly informed respecting the attempt on the part of the Prussian authorities to deliver me up to the Russians. The particulars of the transaction are as follows: In January 1831, I was sent by the national Polish government through the Prussian dominions on a mission to London. On my way through Silesia I was arrested by the Prussian authorities at Breslau. I was imprisoned for the space of one calendar month, during which time a gendarme kept watch over me day and night, as your turnkeys do at Newgate over criminals between their condemnation and execution. At the expiration of a month, the Russian general Diebitch having pressed forward, the rumour became accredited that the Russians had occupied Warsaw. It was then insidiously proposed to me that I should give my word of honour never again to set foot in Prussia, as the condition of allowing me to recross the Polish frontier. With this condition I complied; but on reaching the last station on the boundary, the commanding officer, a good fellow, commiserating my case, in-

formed me that I was about to be delivered up to the Russians, who were occupying the frontier.

"My escort, on reaching it, demanded from the party into whose hands they delivered me, a receipt in the name of the Russian imperial government.

"To my joy, and to the consternation of my companions, the detachment turned out to be not Russian but Polish; and its commander, who released me, replied, that whatever might be the case in Prussia, they only gave receipts for cattle, not for men.

"I afterwards ascertained that the authorities of Breslau had been deceived by the Prussian States' Gazette, which announced that the Russian army had taken Warsaw, which it only occupied in the following September, seven months afterwards. &c. &c. &c.

"KRYSTYN LACH SZYRMA.

"Devonport, April, 1846."

The fatal termination of the revolution was chiefly brought about by the permission given to Russian troops to traverse the Prussian territory, and by supplying the Russian army with provisions, whilst the same frontier was so hermetically closed

to the Poles, that even medical aid was refused them. When the national government of Poland, the commander in chief Rybinski and twenty-eight thousand men, took refuge in Prussia, they laid down their arms by a capitulation which insured them hospitality and protection.

Of this number, at least eighteen thousand were subsequently delivered into the hands of the Russians, either by forcing them at the point of the bayonet to recross the Russian frontier, or by refusing them provisions, and threatening coercion on the one side, whilst on the other holding out the solemn assurance that they would be allowed, on reaching Poland, to return to their own homes. As detachments of the refugees were directed towards the frontier, they became in some instances acquainted with the fate which had befallen those preceding them, and, like oxen at the smell of blood on the threshold of the shambles, refused to proceed. These unfortunates, though offering only a passive resistance, were then charged by Prussian cavalry, who rode over them, plied them with musketry and grape, and pricked them with bayonets as they clung in desperation to the trees, and declared their determination rather to suffer death than fall into the hands of the Muscovites.

According to the avowal of the Prussian government, organised bodies of Polish soldiery, to the amount of eight-and-twenty thousand men, had sought refuge on the Prussian territory, without taking into account those who came individually, or by small detachments.

These men laid down their arms on the express stipulation that they should be protected from the Russians.

Inclusive of those who escaped through Austria and Saxony,—of officers, civilians, and every other class of emigrants,—no more than eight thousand reached the west of Europe. A few months after (again according to the avowal of the Russian government), there remained only four thousand Polish refugees in the kingdom of Prussia.

Even according to its own admission, therefore sixteen thousand Poles were driven by force back into the power of the Russians. These men would never have laid down their arms excepting on the assurance of being protected from such a fate. All that they asked was to be allowed to proceed to France, Belgium, England, or the United States. The Prussian government could not even allege economic motives for its barbarity, because Rybinski brought with, and delivered up to the

authorities, two millions of Polish florins. A German eye-witness gave the following account of the transaction.

"June 29, 1832.

"The Prussian government has ordered all Polish soldiers to return to Poland, promising that they would not be in any way molested, but, on the contrary, would be allowed to return to their respective homes. Prussian officers harangued them, told them they were betrayed by their leaders, who do not find any support from France; that those who retired from France have been sent to Algiers, and made slaves; that France, for whom so much Polish blood has been spilt, was entirely devoted to the Russian and Prussian system. The poor Poles yielded to their remonstrances, and, divided into small columns, took their way towards Poland; but on approaching the frontiers, they heard how their companions had been treated, and refused to march. This gave rise to cruel scenes. The disarmed Polish soldiers fell on the ground, when a regiment of cuirassiers was ordered to rush on them on horseback and trample on their bodies, and the infantry struck them with the butt end of their muskets! Several lives were lost;

one non-commissioned officer had his nose cut off by a Prussian, and instead of being sent to the hospital, he was tied to a waggon and driven on foot. Such cruel proceedings exasperated the inhabitants, who were Jews. They sent their agents to apprise those soldiers who were yet behind, of the fate which awaited them; and seven hundred dispersed immediately into the woods and villages.

A letter of another German, from Eastern Prussia, written on the 15th of July, to one of his friends at Paris, contains the following:—

"Immediately after your departure, thirty-two officers of the Polish lancers arrived here.—They are all expecting their amnesty. The soldiers who were stationed in the neighbourhood of Lutz (probably Lyck) were compelled by famine, or violence exercised upon them, to re-enter Poland. What a heart-rending sight was it for me to look upon these unfortunate men, who asked, with tears in their eyes, that they should not be delivered to the barbarity of the Russians! They all looked exhausted, some were sick, and Prussian soldiers compelled them with the butt-end of their muskets, and with their swords, to advance towards the frontiers. It was revolting to witness this cruel proceeding of our

government; but I could not help your compatriots —I was scarcely permitted to pity their ill fate."

"I have just returned," writes Mr. Samuel Howe, to Thomas Campbell, "from amongst those poor fellows * * * If the voice of his wife and his children cannot induce the Polish exiled soldier to return to his country, it must be that he regards it as a hell; and they are worse than demons who would drive him into it * * * you have heard that promises and threats had been used to induce these soldiers to re-enter Poland, and that when these failed, the bullet and bayonet were resorted to. Yes, sir, all this is true; but it is not all the truth. *I have seen* the unfortunate men who were still lingering with wounds received in the affairs of Marienburg and Dischau, where Prussia so wantonly stained her escutcheon with the blood of unarmed exiles, yet was not so moved with indignatien as at discovering the moral persecution by which Prussia is endeavouring to drive these men into Poland. By the one she stabs her victim in an ebullition of passion at his obstinate resistance; but by the other she is coolly binding the victim, to offer him up to the ever whetted knife of Russia."

"* * * It is known what promises of protection, what pledges of good faith she gave when this army laid down its arms on her territory. The Polish officers were to be treated with the honours of war, and arms presented by the Prussian soldiers as to their own officers. They were to be free to come and go where and when they would; the soldiers were to be well provided for and left free to go whenever they should desire. * * * Prussia found it impossible to shake the spirit of the army while the officers remained with the men. These, therefore, were separated from them; those who hesitated about going were torn away by force; and those who resisted were severely punished. You may imagine the feelings of the poor soldier, on seeing his only friend, his last remaining officer, torn from him; and you would not be surprised if he had broken out into open mutiny; yet he did not so. I remember, while I was at Marienburg, an officer was discovered among the men, in the disguise of a common soldier; he was taken away by *gens-d'armes*; the soldiers, clamouring and swearing they would not be separated from him, followed him to the prison-door; and the Prussians, finding they could not get rid of them, shut the whole nine in together.

I left Marienburg eight days after, and the poor fellows were still in the dungeons.

"The object of separating officers from the army was, to be enabled the better to act upon the men; and they were then quartered off in small squads upon the peasantry, dragooned up and down the country by the soldiers, and continually urged nearer and nearer to the frontier occupied by the Russians. About two-pence a day is allowed them by the Prussian government; and with that, they must find themselves everything. They are most miserably clad, and hundreds of them are without shirts to their backs; yet did the Prussian authorities forbid me to distribute clothing to them. General Schmidt ordered me away from the premises, and sent *gens-d'armes* to enforce his order; and *I have among my papers his written refusal of my application for a permission to distribute clothing, even though I offered to do it in the presence of a Prussian officer of his naming!*

"Sir, I would that my feeble pen could do anything like justice to this subject. I would I could but describe to you the half I felt, whilst but five weeks since, I was in the midst of these poor Polish soldiers; I should hold up to you a picture of long-suffering patriotism, of patient devotion, that you

would hardly conceive falls to the lot of a common soldier. From all my preconceived notions of Polish patriotism, and of Polish heroism, I had no idea that the common soldier, the poor ignorant peasant of Poland, possessed such a stern devotion to his country, as to enable him to endure what these men have endured, and are still enduring.

"Separated from their officers, in a strange land, poorly fed, and miserably clad; at one moment flattered by the promise of good treatment in Russia; and assured that France and all other nations have refused to receive them; and the next, threatened with imprisonment or expulsion: reduced almost to despair at their lonely situation and without a hope of alleviation of their suffering; they still resist every effort of Prussia to induce them into Poland, and seek every possible chance of escape towards France. I shall never forget meeting a noble young fellow of the Krakous guards, wandering in the high roads of Prussia; it was a cold day, and he was shivering in his ragged and soiled uniform; his feet were swollen, and his countenance was wan and haggard; he had not a farthing in his pocket; he knew not a word of the language of the country, and was pointing to the west, and asking the road to France. Poor fellow!

he imagined, from the length of time he had been wandering, that it was but a few leagues distant; and yet, he was on the banks of the Oder!"

Let us now take the testimony of an eye-witness, who saw these unfortunates in the custody of the Russians.

"In the month of July, 1832, the Polish soldiers were marched through the palatinate of Plock, (Russian Poland,) on their return from Prussia, and conducted in several detachments, by different roads, under escorts three or four times more numerous than the detachments themselves. One party passed through Prasynz. It consisted of from 600 to 800 men, accompanied by two batallions of Russian infantry, marching in close order on each side of them. The head and rear of the column consisted of troops of Cossacs, and two guns with lighted matches. The inhabitants on their line of march were not allowed to offer any provisions or refreshment to their brethren.

* * * * *

"A good many were brought to Plock and Mlawa; they were those whom the Prussians had wounded, in compelling them by force to return under Russian dominion."

These men had nominally been domesticated. Their treatment under the amnesty was as follows:

1stly, all who were in the Polish army at the time of the outbreak were to serve in the Russian ranks till they had completed fifteen years; 2ndly, all those who had voluntarily or forcedly been enlisted since, to serve fifteen years from the time of the amnesty; 3dly, all officers who had obtained commissions during the revolutionary war, to serve fifteen years as privates.

Now it must be remembered that the knout and exile to Siberia are often commuted to service in the ranks, as the next grade of punishment; that the discharge of a soldier till disabled is unknown in the Russian army, except upon paper; and that the service of the private includes various gradations of misery. Military organisation extends so far, that even the galley-slaves, (or men of the *arrestantsky roth,)* working in chains, are soldiers in the imperial service. The terms of the imperial edict of amnesty left the authorities at liberty to send the refugees to corps in the Caucasus or Siberia, or even into the ranks of those who work in chains; but it did not allow them to exempt any one from military service.

To the personal knowledge of the author,

several of these refugees thus given up by Prussia, were, in 1838, 39, and 40, working in the *arrestantsky roth* in the dock-yards of St. Petersburg and Cronstadt. So cruel is the condition, and so severe the discipline under which these men are kept, that they frequently turn desperate, attempt to murder the soldiers guarding them, throw themselves on their bayonets, or dash out their own brains against the wall. Furthermore, several of the Polish prisoners, who at Cronstadt refused to take the oath of allegiance to Nicholas, were refugees expulsed from Prussia, or lured by the solemn assurance that they should be allowed to return to their own homes.

The reader will find in the Revelations of Russia, an account of how these men were murdered by scores in the sight of the whole city, in pursuance of their sentence signed by the hand of the emperor, condemning them to eight thousand lashes a-piece; how they expired, notwithstanding the cruel intermissions in their punishment, long before the whole of this infliction, which would have sufficed to reduce a human body to a pulpy mass of macerated flesh, bruised bones, and coagulated gore.

There remained four thousand Poles in Prussia a few months after the Polish army had taken

refuge on its territory. These consisted chiefly of fugitives who had dispersed about the country. They were submitted to Prussian military organisation, and officered by Prussian officers. Let us see how they were employed.

A soldier of the 4th regiment of the line writes, on the 25th of July, from the Prussian fortress of Bischofsberg. "Poor wretch, I am incessantly tied to my wheelbarrow. Our detachment, though composed of brave men, is treated in the most cruel manner. We are reproached with having excited soldiers to resistance, at the moment they were to be delivered up to the Russians. They vent all their revenge on us—and we are forced to work from early in the morning till late at night, without relaxation. You would not recognise any one of us. We are pale and wan as those digged up from their graves, and it is not astonishing, as food is given us but once a day, and this food is often so bad, that in spite of hunger it is impossible to partake of it. You know that we were not afraid to die when on the field of battle; but to suffer without interruption, to be worn down by hard labour, and to die a death useless to our native land, is frightful, and renders life an irksome burden!"

Such was the conduct of the Prussian cabinet, in 1832, towards the Polish refugees to whom it offered hospitality, and the reader may hence form some idea of their treatment under Frederick William the Fourth, who has notoriously shown himself more hostile to that people than his predecessor.

Nothing could be more significant of the unpopularity of his rule in Prussian Poland, than the fact that during the revolution of 1831, this portion of the Polish nation did not attempt to make common cause with its brethren; whereas in 1846 we find the duchy of Posen prepared to take the initiative in the attempt which has just been suppressed, against the three spoliating powers.

The government papers themselves admit the arrest of eight hundred noblemen in Posen and its environs.

"Fifteen years ago," said a nobleman of Prussian Poland to the author, "I, like many worldly-wise people,—giving our best wishes to our fellow-countrymen beneath the Austrian and Russian rule,—thought it was our duty to look only to ourselves. Though we placed no reliance on the promises of our sovereign, we knew that he was old, and our hopes centred in his son. We never

doubted that he would give us representative institutions; and those who, like myself, had property to lose, and a salutary dread of revolutionary excess, deemed that it would be far better to enjoy such advantages—sharing with our German yokefellows that Prussian nationality, which, hitherto a mere sound, might thus have become a reality—than to identify our interests with those of our race, name, and language in Austrian and Russian Poland. But we have been justly punished for our selfishness. The three despotisms, deriving strength from their nefarious connivance, have put in practice with the disjointed fragments of our people, the fable of the lictor's rods, so easily broken when divided.

"We have seen the prince-royal step into his father's place, and found his promises as stale and hollow as his father's. We have found by dire experience, that our German yokefellows cannot be trusted; not, indeed, through want of sympathy, but through weakness. This year (1845) a large proportion of the German members enthusiastically promised to back us in an address to his majesty, demanding the fulfilment of his promises. But when the time came, they withdrew in terror; and you will find, if you refer to the list, only two or

three Germans who did, and only two or three Poles who did not vote for the address. Independent, therefore, of antipathies of race, which render amalgamation so distasteful, our interest bids us seek the only solution of our difficulties in making common cause with the other eighteen millions of Poles whose unextinguishable patriotism promises to maintain the Polish nationality, longer than in the ordinary course of events, the artificial combinations of policy which oppress it, can endure.

"The people of Germany, we are fully aware, wish us well,—a sentiment which we reciprocate; and the growth of public opinion in Germany will undoubtedly aid our efforts; but experience has taught the most timid amongst us, that it is madness to count on any but negative assistance from that people. The great movement which is preparing amongst the Sclavonic, and at any rate amongst the Polish nations, may give the example and the opportunity to the Germans. German freedom may grow from Sclavonic or Polish liberty and independence, but to wait till Germany alone achieved or offered us any but the passive co-operation of opinion, would be to play the part of the countryman who loitered by the margin of the

stream he wished to cross, in the illusive hope that its waters would flow away."

The address alluded to, of the Polish members, praying the king to fulfil his promises of granting them a constitution, drew down a severe reprimand from his majesty. The representations made by several of the provincial states, complaining of the increased rigour of the censorship, were long left unanswered. The tardy reply, made only a few months since, is probably still fresh in the memory of many of my readers. It was not only a refusal to mitigate the severity of these laws, but an insulting refusal. "I will alter the laws of which you complain," replies this royal puppet of the Tsar; "but it shall only be to increase their stringency." Finding that he had then gone too far, fresh promises of a constitution, to be granted in January 1847, were made through the semi-official organs of the government; but, at the same time, we are informed that new laws regulating the press are to be made in July. Thus we find that threats of retrogressive measures usually accompany and qualify all liberal and progressive promises, with this further drawback, that the former have always been punctually put into execution, whilst the latter are, without exception, still awaiting their fulfilment.

This king, as we have already mentioned, outraged the feelings of his Polish subjects, by a renewal of the cartel; by allowing his peasantry to be kidnapped across the frontier and transported to the Siberian mines, and by exercising an increased severity towards the refugees from the other despotisms. One recent instance, illustrative of the change of conduct in this matter, immediately occurs to the author.

It is only a twelvemonth ago, that a Polish refugee, who had embraced the ecclesiastical profession, and long abandoned all interference in political matters, was, after eight months' negotiation, refused passports to visit Prussian Poland, for the purpose of seeing his aged father; though in the late reign this privilege had been conceded him on account of his inoffensive character. The Poles under the dominion of Prussia, finding that the effect of their forbearance from all participation in the movements of 1831, has been only, after fifteen years of subsequent patience, to remove them still further from the fulfilment of their hopes, whether founded on the promises of their sovereign, on the energy of the German people, or on both, cannot now be blamed, if, yielding to their sympathies, they make common

cause with their brother Poles, and read in the signs portentous of so many changes throughout Eastern Europe, the augury of a more hopeful future, even though exchanging hostility to its banded despotisms for the bootless civil struggle they have so long carried on with the duplicity and prevarication of their government.

"We have been waiting fifteen years for the German liberals," writes one of the late conspirators in the grand duchy of Posen. "We are tired of waiting for them. We repudiate all transaction with the Prussian government—all idea which some of us may once have entertained, of blending, under constitutional forms, with the German population, into that Prussian people whose nationality is yet a fiction. We renounce all hope of that initiative movement in Germany which we have been so long expecting, and we are convinced that it must originate with us for their benefit, instead of with them for our own. The political sympathies of the masses in Germany are with our cause—the people of Germany has no wish to rule over us, no more desire to amalgamate with us, than we have with them. We have a common enemy—their despotic princes; a common end—the attainment of free institutions; but these, both Poles and

Sclavonians will best attain by enlisting under the banners of their respective races. Thirty millions of Germans and twenty millions of Poles, differing in language, habits, customs, and manners from each other, are assuredly numerically strong enough whilst socially and territorially sufficiently divided, to prosper, without fresh attempts to effect that fusion which the efforts of sixty years have failed to accomplish, and which those formerly best disposed towards it, now regard as impracticable, till both have attained that degree of civilisation which cannot be reached without freedom as its earliest preliminary."

It is undoubtedly true, that the condition of the inhabitants of Prussian Poland is far more favourable than that of their brethren beneath the Russian and Austrian yoke. The condition of the latter, where slavery or serfdom in their worst forms have been perpetuated or imported, where the arts of centralisation are employed only to exercise a more benumbing oppression and ruthless violence against all classes of society—can only be compared, as they have been so often, to hideous oriental despotisms.

Viewed beside these, the government of Polish Prussia appears so fair as not unfrequently to be viewed with complacency by the Russian and Austrian

Poles, but it is otherwise with its own subjects. They are no longer disposed to endure contentedly, a state of things which never entirely satisfied them, and which now is retrogressive. During fifteen years, education and enlightenment have made rapid progress. The author does not term progress, the proficiency of a large portion of the population in rudiments, conjointly with their restriction to the same, but alludes to the vast increase since that period of a really educated class. This class, whose opinions react on the whole people, will not measure their condition by advantageous comparison with the fate of the Russian and Austrian Poles, but have a natural tendency to take the standard of their political and social rights from those possessed by free and constitutional nations.

It must be remembered, that the general dissemination of the press has produced, in the age in which we live, a more rapid movement in the moral, than steam navigation or railroads on the material world. The progress of opinion has become so much more rapid that a quarter of a century in our era operates greater changes than four centuries could formerly have produced. The people of England once submitted patiently to the tyranny of Henry the Eighth. In that reign they would

have found the rule of Charles the First, or James the Second comparatively mild and paternal. Yet when the reigns of Charles the First and James the Second arrived, the people would no longer tolerate their milder sway, which was still too arbitrary for the spirit of the times; and there is now scarcely an Englishman to be found, even amongst those who deny a niche to Cromwell's statue, or who sympathise most feelingly with the misfortunes of the Stuart race, who does not applaud the resistance offered by the parliament to the encroachments of King Charles, or the expulsion of the next but one of his successors.

Now, with races kept in ignorance, and suffering oppression, that change which took place in the public feeling of the British people between the reigns of Henry the Eighth, and Charles Stuart, is produced in our own time. Under the joint influence of the press and the vivyfying example of other nations, advantages which our ancestors did not enjoy, we find the life of one generation more rapidly ripening civilisation and political perception than was effected during many in the centuries to which allusion has been made.

This is the case with Prussian Poland. The rule of its government is flattered by comparing it

to that of Charles the First, and the Second,—it is, in fact, what theirs would probably have become, if success, instead of death and banishment, had met their efforts. It is true that it may be considered mild and salutary beside the habitual harshness of the gloomy Russian despotism. It is true that the means it employs for the prevention and repression of change are merciful beside those resorted to by Austria, when its Machiavelian jealousy is alarmed for the safety of any of its possessions. It is furthermore true, that, during the last thirty years, the prosperity of Prussian Poland has undeniably increased; but are we therefore to blame the Prussian Poles because, in 1846, they are impatient of a state of things which we violently exploded for even in 1688?—Are they to be tongue-tied by gratitude, and to attribute to their government that slender measure of material prosperity which has fallen to their share,—or rather, when they regard the immense proportionate strides made in this respect by all free states, to feel indignation at the vast progress which despotism has impeded, instead of thankfulness at the advantages which it has permitted?

Such, at any rate, is the feeling of the Polish subjects of Prussia. They are led to such conclu-

sions alike by a vivid recollection of the extinct glories and independence of their people, and by the sanguine and restless temper of the national mind, which is essentially calculated to render them rather emulous of any condition above their own, than contented with it from comparison of others less happy.—This tendency, which may, when misdirected, lead to turbulence, is, it should be remembered, an ingredient indispensable towards the attainment of national greatness, and will be found in the characters of the French, English, Dutch, and of every people who have achieved it on the basis of civil liberty, and for the national benefit.

Changes have indeed taken place, within recent years, in the opinion of the most practical amongst the enlightened men of Prussian Poland; but only as to the means of best effecting the one object they have had incessantly at heart, the attainment of free government, instead of arbitrary despotism. Hence, at one time a large party looked forward to a constitution, as the most certain means of enjoying, though incorporated with a strange race, positive freedom at the sacrifice of those more remote hopes which strict adherence to the principle of national indivisibility might have offered.

But even the most moderate and practical men have been long since convinced, firstly, of the impossibiiity of the concession of a constitution; and, secondly, mistrust of its character when granted.

Between that free, national government in which the people has a share through whatever remote delegation,—which we understand in the West by constitutional government, and a purely arbitrary rule, there is as great an essential difference as between a dead body and another animated by the breath of life. An arbitrary may be made as closely to resemble a free government, in its form, as the rootless bough stuck into the ground does the growing sapling—as the galvanised corpse, the living body. Yet, no two things externally most dissimilar, can differ more than these, identical in form; but from one of which the vivifying principle has departed. There may be a difference in the strength or intensity of vitality, but there are no gradations between life or death—a being lives or has ceased to live; and so it is with the character of governments,—they are either arbitrary or not arbitrary. We all know how much less than Shakspeare's "bare bodkin" will reduce to a mass of corrupting clay the most magnificent intel-

lectual and physical organisation; and thus, in a like manner, the most perfect and organised representative system may, by one single clause, be reduced to an empty formula, instead of proving a palladium of the civil and social liberties of the people.

The right of Charles the Tenth, to issue, under any circumstances, his ordinances, would have rendered the "*Charte*" a dead letter. The power of the crown to prorogue parliament for an indefinite period, and to raise taxes, and keep the mutiny act in force until it met, would as effectually render its government a despotism, as if we were to adopt the Russian catechism as the expression of our political creed. Yet the constitutions of the kingdom of Poland, of the republic of Cracow, and of the several German states, have all been reduced to nullity, by the subsequent introduction of such clauses, or were ushered lifeless into the world by its insertion at their birth. With the German states this took place chiefly at the instigation of Prussia; and the use, under such circumstances, of constitutional forms, was, on the one hand, to amuse the people, and on the other, to deceive the public of free countries.

If, therefore, Prussia should nominally fulfil that

promise, which in 1830 was still hopeful to its Polish subjects, they have, judging by its conduct since then, every reason to dread that it will be rendered illusory. The greater threatened severity of the censorship, at the moment when remote promise of a constitution is given, are strongly confirmatory of this apprehension. The press is now so far from being free, that any greater stringency can only portend as total a suppression of the public voice, as in the Russian empire.

Now, over a widely extended territory, where inter-communication is slow and unfrequent, and with the suspicious antecedents of the Prussian cabinet, who can believe that representative institutions will prove anything but an illusion if accompanied by the utter extinction of the press?

Between free institutions and a shackled press, and a free press with an absolute government, if the latter were in any but exceptional cases possible, it would undoubtedly be wise to select the despotism.

British India, with its absolute government and free press, offers an example of the advantages of this anomalous condition over that of constitutionally organised states, where the expression of public opinion is forbidden, or perhaps impossible.

Freedom, in fact, is unattainable without it ; and hence, until the modern extension of the press, which magnifies and disseminates so ubiquitously the popular voice, we have no instance of the enjoyment of liberty by any great nation or extensive people.

If we refer to the middle ages or the ancients, we never find freedom extending beyond the city walls, the islet, or the valley, where men could congregate and inter-communicate their opinions.

The freedom of the Greek and Roman republics was really limited to a small and concentrated population ; and it was lost when Rome became so large that only a tithe of its inhabitants could any longer gather in the forum.

The existence of a press, and that liberty without which its existence is reduced to inutility, are therefore the first conditions of the freedom of any extensive people. This Prussia has always greatly limited, and now proposes to annihilate. The very men therefore, who, in 1830, looked with hope to the Prussian government, have for these reasons withdrawn all faith, not only from its promises, but would withhold it from any preliminary acts towards its accomplishment. This conclusion once formed, they transfer their hopes to the inextin-

guishable national feeling of twenty millions of their race, and regard the unendurable nature of their oppression under the Russian and Austrian yokes as the surest guarantee of a finally successful effort to skake it off. Hence many of these same men, once confident in the promises of their cabinet, have since been opposed to any efforts to obtain a constitution; in the validity of which, if obtained, they ceased to believe, but which might have withdrawn others from the end which they had now in view. The opposition given of late years to such a demand in the duchy of Posen, and indeed till recently, is to be thus explained. The German liberals, however, began to complain of this conduct; the government hirelings argue from it the popular indifference to free institutions. Under these circumstances, the Polish members of the provincial estates last year voted the address which has been mentioned, reminding Frederick William of his promises; on which occasion they were left in the lurch by their German colleagues. Meanwhile, however, the feeling of Polish unity and independence was making rapid strides. So powerful has it become with the noble class, as daily to dissever anti-national ties, the growth of years of intercourse with German fellow-subjects, whilst

at the same time triumphing over the pride of caste, nourished during centuries, and the love of property. Previous to the discovery of the participation of Prussian Poland in the recent conspiracy against the three despotisms, it was observed that the nobility had for the first time, of its own accord, waived the rules of etiquette which rigorously excluded the middle and lower classes from companionship with them. Countesses led off the balls at Posen and other places as the partners of the burghers and artisans, and men of the first family with their daughters. This is a reflection of the feeling animating the Polish nobility under the rule of Russia and Austria. Knowledge and experience has brought with it the conviction that private wealth and individual power to oppress are no compensation for the want of national and personal independence. Hence universally the landowners are anxious to free their serfs where servitude exists; and in an incredible number of instances, to divide their lands amongst the peasantry, as a means conducing to an inestimable result. So far has their enthusiastic exaltation led them to undervalue property, so far has the oppression of their governments depreciated it. This is the communism which Metternich sneers at. Perhaps everywhere impracticable, it

is liable to invincible suspicion, when advocated by the poor man who seeks to share in the wealth of the rich; but when originating with the rich man seeking to divide his wealth with the poor, it assumes a complexion which places it above misinterpretation.

Now, the nobility of Poland, resembling in its peculiar position no other in the world, is of a greater social and numerical importance. The general ignorance respecting this body enables the despotic cabinets and their hireling scribes easily to enlist against it the liberal sympathies of writers, under the erroneous impression that it is a small privileged class, similar to the titular nobility of France, England, and Germany; and one whose interests are antagonistic to those of an immense majority. Metternich speaks of the insurgents, in his vindication of the atrocities in Gallicia, as a few nobles. Papers of different shades of opinion, arguing differently from the same premises, have regarded the Polish nobility as a caste analogous with nobility at home. It cannot therefore be too often repeated, that the Polish nobility are in extent a nation, or three millions at the lowest computation; more numerous than the whole Scottish people,—more numerous, in proportion to the popu-

lation of Poland, than all the nobility, gentry, annuitants, professional men, manufacturers, merchants, shopkeepers, soldiers and sailors put together in the united kingdom of Great Britain, and equalling alone the whole native German population of the Austrian empire.*

The nobles, who (if we deduct the Jews) are in the proportion of one to every five individuals of the Polish population, monopolise ninety-nine hundredths of the education and enlightenment of the people; who, with few exceptions, throughout Poland, are disposed to make common cause with the nobility against the three despotisms, through the mere stimulus of national pride,—of antipathy to the Russ and German, and blind religious zeal. These exceptions only exist where spoliating governments have maintained, restored, established, or embittered the feudal relations between the nobility and peasantry, whether in the form of absolute slavery, as in the incorporated provinces of Russian Poland, or of serfdom, in the Russian kingdom of Poland, and the Austrian province of Gallicia. The Machiavelian foresight of both

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* The total number of Germans in the Austrian empire is estimated at about double this number, but the remainder are colonists and temporary sojourners from other parts of Germany.

cabinets was keenly sensible of the facilities to be derived in suppressing any national movements, from the fear and antipathy which oppression would generate between the lord and peasant; and this oppression it has originated or encouraged wherever it could put forth the noble as the ostensible instrument, and keep its own agency occult from the victim. But the results of this policy have been frustrated by the strong religious feeling of the peasantry, in every instance where their faith has not happened to be identical with that of the state church.

Thus Russia has substituted slavery for serfdom in the Polish provinces; but the religious hatred of the Roman Catholics, or United Greek population, to the Russo-Greek government, far exceeds any antipathy which slavery can generate towards their masters. In the Polish kingdom, Nicholas has introduced serfdom where the peasantry were free; but here again all the hatred of the serf to the baron is merged in abhorrence of the heterodox Tsar; and the peasantry cannot, in either, be roused against those who are forcedly their lords. so long as they are enemies of their heretic tyrant. It is therefore only in Little Russia and its frontiers, where the nobility are frequently Roman Catholic,

and the peasantry of the Greek faith, that the Russian cabinet could raise the peasantry to rebellion, by means of that slavery which it has introduced and carefully perpetuates.

So, in Austria, the Roman Catholic peasantry may be excited against their lords, by the Roman Catholic emperor, whilst the Greek peasantry are scarcely accessible to this influence. Now, in Prussian Poland, the peasant was freed from serfdom by the celebrated constitution declared on the 3rd of May, 1791, by the last quatrennia, diet of the independent Polish republic. This declaration was confirmed by the King of Prussia, when this territory fell to his share, at the partition of other states; and from a nominal recognition, it became the practical enjoyment of a right, when Napoleon united this portion of Poland with the independent grand duchy of Warsaw, which he erected. After its re-transferrence to Prussia in 1819, a part of the land occupied by the peasantry was assigned to them in perpetuity, with the full concurrence, and at the express desire of the landowners. The Prusso-Polish peasant is consequently as free as any individual can be, in a despotism; and he is, furthermore, almost without exception a proprietor.

It would hence appear natural, that he should be better disposed towards his government, than his fellow-countrymen beneath the rule of Austria and Russia. But this is not the case. He is a pious Roman Catholic, the government Lutheran. He is a true Pole, and hates the government for its German character, and because it is chiefly carried on by Germans, who alone are trusted in the Polish provinces, and towards whom his antipathy is so great, that the inhabitants of whole districts, who have recently joined temperance societies, refuse the stimulus of tobacco, offered as a substitute to keep them in their good resolutions, assigning as a reason, that "*it is so German.*" He further despises the royal government for the connivance popularly attributed to it, in the oppression of his Russo-Polish brethren; and it is impossible to excite him against the Roman Catholic nobility, between whom and himself the apple of discord, in the form of serfdom, has not been thrown, in the present generation, and whom he regards with as much confidence and affection as any tenantry have yet regarded landlords, with whom a common hatred of a foreign yoke identified them in feeling. It is to be observed, too, that the peasant in Prussian Poland has been gradu-

ally becoming poorer, more discontented, and more dependent on the nobles, since the first distribution to him of the land on which he was originally settled as a serf. The want of capital, the amount of taxation, the pressure of conscription, ignorance, and the incessant subdivision of his little property, with the deterioration of culture consequent thereupon, have obliged him to have recourse to the indulgence and capital of his lord, for the cultivation of his land; whilst, on the other hand, all the burthens which press upon him, originate with a foreign heretical government, whom he has witnessed, and daily witnesses, hunting out refugees in his villages, to deliver them up to the grim Cossacks on the frontier; a process which daily reminds him of the thousands formerly driven to the same destination, like herds of cattle; and appealing, in the name of their common brotherhood, to him, for succour against the persecution of the Russian, and the treachery of the German.

The same ill-judged interference on the part of Frederick William the Fourth with the Archbishop of Cologne, which has so seriously indisposed against the royal government, the Roman Catholic population of its Rhenish provinces, has embroiled him with certain of the Polish bishops, and em-

bittered the religious prejudices of the Polish population.

This population is computed to number about two millions, who may, strictly speaking, be termed Polish; but the Sclavonic subjects of Prussia do not certainly number less than six millions, and probably nearer to seven-and-a-half,—or half the population of the kingdom.

If we draw upon the map of Europe a line curving eastwards sufficiently to form the small segment of an extensive circle, with one extremity of this slight bow passing through the island of Rugen in the Baltic, the other through Trieste on the Adriatic, all the territory that lies to the east of this line, within the Prussian frontier, is peopled by Sclavonians, or by a population chiefly Sclavonic. The ordinary maps of Prussia, like those of Austria, would lead, by the great extension of German names, to very different inferences,; but these names are frequently unknown upon the spot. Bromberg, for instance, on the frontiers of West Prussia, is called by the natives Bidgosh (Bydgoszcz); Lemberg, in Gallicia, is only known as Levof (Lvov); and a traveller inquiring for either Lemberg or Bromberg in a neighbouring village, would stand far less chance of being understood,

than a Frenchman asking at Greenwich the way to *Londres*.

If we take the duchy of Posen, its population is almost entirely Polish, though the Polish and Lithuanian population extends southward into Silesia, and partially northwards through East Prussia. The population of Silesia is wholly Sclavonic, that of the provinces of East and West Prussia everywhere Polish and Lithuanian, except in the vicinity of the sea. In Pomerania even, the bulk of the peasantry speak a Sclavonic dialect, which betrays their origin; and the Sclavonic names and language trench even upon the province of Brandenburg. The whole population of the territory described is not less than eight millions, of which the Germans constitute only a fraction. Wherever the Sclavonic dialect is spoken, the sympathies are anti-German, anti-Prussian, and consequently with the Poles and against the government. Of the remaining seven millions of the Prussian kingdom, the Roman Catholic population of the Rhenish provinces, to the amount of a couple of millions, partake the same religious and political feeling.

But the five remaining millions, centrally situate, are not Prussians united by the ties of nationality, or having any interest in keeping the

remainder in subjection. They are passive Brandenburgers, Westphalians, and Saxons: the two latter, in as far as they entertain any opinion, discontented with their transferrence to Prussia, and in as far as they express it, favourably inclined towards the Poles, as the representatives of turbulent opposition to despotic power. They number, besides, chiefly in Westphalia, nearly another million of Roman Catholics.

Nothing, therefore, can be more artificial than the Prussian kingdom.

In Prussia Proper, as we have seen, the immense bulk of the population is Sclavonic—aliens in race, interests, and affection to the reigning family and their German subjects. Where, then, are the Prussians, unless we take as such the Brandenburgers? and where is Prussia, unless we place it in the barren sands of Brandenburg? since all its territory besides consists of disaffected dependencies, at best apathetically indifferent, and more often cankered to the core by religious, political, or national animosities. These are considerations which have not been neglected by the Polish subjects of the Prussian cabinet, who have determined on a course of hostility against it; and they should not be lost sight of in judging of a determination

which might be considered hopelessly rash if we viewed the Prussian kingdom with its artificial composition and its factitious nationality, not as it really is, but as it has popularly succeeded in imposing itself upon the world.

No denial has been made of the extensive ramifications in Prussian Poland, of the late ill-advised project of general Polish insurrection. On its fortunate issue in Prussia, where a plan had been organised to seize on several fortresses, depended its chief chances of success. It was frustrated by the vigilance of the government, which received timely notice of the proposed attempt through the indiscretion, or treachery, which was to be expected amongst so large a body of conspirators; whilst the comparative leniency of the authorities was calculated to lead weak but well-disposed men to put upon their guard officials with whom in Prussian Poland they lived on terms of amity, but towards whom, under the Russian rule, they would have breathed nothing but hatred and defiance.

Throughout the province of Posen, it is calculated that fifteen hundred persons have been arrested; the government organs confessing to eight hundred. As far as it has hitherto proceeded, the Prussian cabinet has shown signs of pursuing at the same

time the most humane and the wisest course towards those compromised within its own territory. Many have already been discharged from custody; and thus far there seems to be an intention on its part of not considering those most deeply implicated, guilty of direct treason; affecting that there is no direct evidence to show that the conspirators meditated capturing the Prussian cannon, arms, and fortresses for any other purpose than that of aiding the Russian and Austrian Poles; or that they ever contemplated definitely renouncing their allegiance to the Prussian sovereignty. In this forbearance, of which a fresh example was afforded in the reluctance of Prussia to bring her troops into collision with the insurgents, it is to be hoped that she will persevere. It is idle to expect that abstaining from the system of terror practised in Russian Poland, where periodic victims are offered up, or from the plan of extermination at second-hand fomented by Austria, will suffice to divert the patriotic thoughts and political aspirations of the Polish population of Prussia from the deep channels in which their current flows so tumultuously; but the reflection, that it is the least perilous course both as regards Poland and Germany, and that all others have signally failed, may suffice to induce

the most cold-hearted statesman steadily to pursue it.

Unhappily, a despotic government, upheld as all despotic governments must be, by violence or fraud, resembles an individual, who, having entered on a course of crime, is compelled by the consequences of one reckless act to the commission of another, and to whom it is forbidden to stop short in the career of evil. Thus, whilst its comparative forbearance towards its own Polish subjects has been thus far laudable, nothing can be more cruel or treacherous than its conduct towards the insurgent Polish subjects of Austria and Russia, whom it lured by the prospect of a sanctuary in its dominions from the protracted resistance of desperation, and whom it now agrees to give up wholesale and in detail to the vengeance of the governments they have offended.

The strong sensation created throughout Germany by the first rumours of a conspiracy in the grand duchy of Posen, induced the Pussian government to resort to the arms of calumny against the malcontents; and of this calumny the effects now recoil on its own policy.

Close upon the first accounts of the disturbed state of Poland, a gross attempt was made to chill

the rising sympathies of the German people and of the western public for the insurgents. The government organs and the hireling press of Prussia circulated that the plan of the conspirators was to massacre the Jewish population of several small towns, for the purpose of drawing to the spot a part of the garrisons of the adjacent fortresses, which they proposed to seize. Lists of proscription, and even a design to destroy by a new St. Bartholomew all their German fellow-subjects, were said to have been discovered. Poison was the agent to be resorted to, and it was circulated, that, with the stores of arms accumulated by the conspirators, whole chests of arsenic had been discovered, labelled,—"Food for the Germans."

The absurdity of these rumours did not prevent them from obtaining a certain credit with the vulgar; and many a German well-wisher of the Poles began to thank his stars at his narrow escape. Such reports did not indeed retain credit when the first edge of the popular appetite for the wonderful and the terrible had passed away; but at least the impression remained of inimical feeling on the part of the Polish towards the German population; and its effect has been to deepen indelibly that line of separation which the govern-

ment has made so many efforts to efface, and on whose obliteration the security of the established order of things has always been foreseen to depend.

These calumnies have not been without some effect on the opinion of Western Europe; and a vague idea is still afloat, of the Jacobinical spirit, ferocious intolerance, and reckless disregard of life, of the projectors of the recent insurrection; to whom was attributed the plan of wantonly butchering an unoffending population, for the sole purpose of finding an opportunity to put their plans of revolt into execution.

These accusations, made without proof by the Prussian government, are denied by the Poles; both interested parties, indeed; but with the former of whom lies the *onus probandi*.

The Prussian government accuses the insurgents of a diabolical intent; the insurgents accuse the Prussian government of diabolical calumny. If the whole insurrection had been prevented, Prussia might, under these circumstances, by the adduction of false evidence, have imposed on the world a belief in the crime which the insurgents are accused of having meditated; but one portion of them did succeed, in the republic of Cracow, in possessing themselves of power;—and how did they act?—

according to the intentions attributed to them by Prussia, proscribing citizens, murdering the Jews, and emulating the horrors of the French revolution? On the contrary, they proved the truth of the intent asserted by their brethren in Russia, by disclaiming and discouraging all violent retribution, by giving passports to their civilian adversaries, by declaring the freedom of the peasantry, and by fraternising with those very Hebrews whose wholesale massacre they were said to have planned in the grand duchy of Posen.

Is it possible to conceive a more practical and striking denial of the falsehood of Prussia, or could a more glaring proof of her calumny have been adduced toward that unhappy people, despoiled by the ruthless barbarity of Russia, and the Machiavelian cruelty of Austria, of name, language, commerce, wealth, political and civil rights; and whom, having nothing more left of which it could be stripped, Prussia seeks to rob of its good name!

The king of Prussia is now in the position of that Tarquin to whom the Sybil offered her mystic tomes, when for the third time she brought him her last remaining volume. Fifteen years ago, a constitution would perhaps still have secured the

loyalty of his Polish subjects. It is now in every human probability too late ever to reconcile the Sclavonians to political union with the Germans. It is still, however, time to secure, by representative institutions, the permanent fidelity of the German population, to a house which having owed its rise to the apostacy of a monkish soldier, may, in a few years hence, have to attribute its expulsion, by an indignant people, to the faithless character of a military bigot, half martinet and half *pietist*. Nevertheless, until this last opportunity is allowed to pass, an irrevocable step into the only safe and righteous path still holds out a dazzling prospect to the Prussian monarch. Germany has ceased to believe in the incessantly reiterated promises of his cabinet, which have become as hacknied as the cry of "wolf" in the fable; but the reality of a constitution, like the appearance of a real wolf, would soon establish its truth and credit; and in that case, for the want of a better centre, the whole German people, craving for unity and independence, must rally round the Prussian sovereignty, which otherwise a few brief years may see levelled in the dust,—a double consideration to which the author respectfully calls the attention of Frederick William.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JEWISH POPULATION OF POLAND.

THERE is an extraneous element mixed up with the Polish population—the Hebrew portion of it—which assumes importance from the considerable fraction it constitutes of the people amongst which it has so long been settled, and derives interest from the fact that it probably numbers one half of the whole race of Israel, equalling alone in extent all its remaining fragments scattered over the surface of the globe; and having, for this reason, preserved more strictly, both its national and sectarian homogeneity, and the traditions, creed, and customs of a distant period.

The whole Jewish population living does not probably exceed four or five millions. Of these, about 255,000 are in Hungary, 46,000 in Holland, 60,000 in France, 20,000 or 25,000 in England, and upwards of two millions in Poland. Of these two millions nearly a million and a half are reckoned to be in the Russian portion of that territory.

Poland, since the period of the crusades, has been looked upon by the children of Israel as the temporary home of its days of exile; the land in which it had tarried for ages being only a place of temporary soujourn in the eyes of a people whose traditions have been transmitted uninterruptedly through tens of centuries.

The Polish Jews are descended from those who took refuge from Germany, driven before the fire and sword of the fanatical crusaders, or expelled by the cruel zeal of the inhabitants during the period of religious excitement, which led to successive attempts at the recovery of the holy sepulchre.

At one period the Jews seem chiefly to have been settled in Germany, and beneath the dominion of the Saracens. From Germany they sought refuge in Poland, where, to this day, they speak amongst themselves a dialect of the German. The great bulk of the Jews in Europe belong either to those who at one time adopted the idiom and customs of Germany, or to those termed the Spanish Jews, who flourished in Spain and Portugal with the Moors, and were expulsed with them. The German Jews are called Askernazim; the Spanish, Sephardim. The Askernazim, as we have seen, were obliged to fly to Poland, where they met with

toleration, which was never denied so long as Poland continued independent. At times they even obtained remarkable privileges, particularly under Cassimir the Great, who married a Jewess and renewed the part of Ahassuerus towards that people, through the intercession of this new Esther.

But in Poland feudality and chivalry prevailed; and though the Hebrews were treated always as well, and often more favourably than the peasantry and burghers, they shared in the knightly contempt entertained by nobility for all whose trade was not the trade of arms, and hence were doomed to a subordinate position. Under the Moors of Spain, who appear to have retained that indifference to birth still common in the East, without inheriting the intolerance of Islamism; the Jews seem to have secured much of the wealth, commerce, and learning of the flourishing empire founded by the followers of the prophet, and not a little of their confidence and favour. For this reason the career of the Sephardim, or Spanish Jews, was more brilliant; and when expulsed with their patrons by the Christian conquerors, they had enjoyed wealth, honours, and power; and hence affect in France, England, and Holland, to look with some disdain on the Askernazim, notwithstanding that the former

now constitute the bone and muscle of their scattered people,—for to one of these two divisions all the western Jews belong. The D'Israelis, Ricardos, Montefiores, for instance, are of the *Sephardim*, the Rothschilds, Goldsmids, &c. of the *Askernazim*.

That the Hebrews should have congregated together or multiplied in Poland to the extent of two millions, is *prima facie* evidence that their treatment must have been far more humane than in those now constitutional countries of the West, where even at the present time they do not amount to one fiftieth or one hundredth of their number in Poland.

But in Poland, during the last centuries of its independence, the condition of the Israelites remained stationary, or it might even be deemed retrogressive, if we consider that the gradual emancipation of so many classes by the absorption of individual talent, education, courage, and learning, into the ranks of the nobility, left the Hebrew, by excluding him from this privilege, still further in the back-ground.

Meanwhile, in France and England, the treatment of the Jews, formerly so inhuman, and the strength of popular prejudice against them, softened to a degree which renders us now unable to appre-

ciate the comparative toleration of law and opinion exercised towards them during a period of universal persecution, and continued to the last moment of national independence. This national independence was destroyed by the three powers at the very moment that the Polish nobles attempted to suppress the errors and abuses of their constitution, which had hitherto led to anarchy. No sooner had their last diet assembled in 1788, and proclaimed, by the constitution of the third of May, 1791, hereditary instead of elective royalty, the substitution of parliamentary majorities for impracticable unanimity, and the emancipation of the peasantry, than the country was divided by its despotic neighbours, who seemed to dread the career of progress and improvement on which Poland was entering, and to which they put an effectual stop.

The diet left the condition of the Jews, when it began these reforms, the same as in the middle ages. Had it been allowed to proceed in the course of amelioration, there is reason to doubt that the people which in the middle ages proved itself so much more tolerant than any other, would have shown itself in the present century behind other civilised countries in toleration. If, however, the condition of the Hebrews remained stationary up

to the partition of Poland, it has since that period cruelly retrograded, alike beneath the rule of Austria, Prussia, and Russia; though in the dominions of the latter, to a degree of almost inexpressible wretchedness.

Let us take the account given of these people in 1841 by Marmier, a narrow-minded and not very profound writer, but a close observer and accurate delineator of all that met his eye. Disgusted with the state of degradation in which the Hebrews appeared, he seems rather to approve their treatment, and hence his testimony is selected as impartial by the author:—

"I had often heard of the hideous appearance of these valleys; but the idea which I had formed was far behind the reality, and I scarce know to what I can compare them. They are more wretched than the Icelandic huts built up of lava; more filthy than the Lapland tents. I can still imagine that I see the slight deal cabins, lighted by a pane or two of glass, and divided by partitions, on each side of which whole families crowd in the mephitic air,—the muddy gutters, in which half-naked children puddle about like unclean animals,—streets, in which nothing is to be met but men and women in rags, glancing half stupified at the

passing stranger ; or following him, to put in practice the artifices of some petty traffic.

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"They inhabit whole villages, and even towns. Isolated in the midst of a Catholic population, despised and shunned, they are nevertheless attached to the soil which has become to them a second country, and to the land which they exhaust by their cunning and instinct of lucre.

"In the towns they accost the traveller at the door of his inn, to importune him with their offers of service. In the villages they exercise different callings. Sometimes they farm the public-houses, and woe to the inhabitants of the place where they obtain the monopoly of spirits. They demoralize and ruin the peasant by pandering to his love of drunkenness, and by giving him ardent spirits on credit, for which they afterwards make him pay exhorbitantly. Some indolent landholders have been so fatally ill-advised as to appoint Jews to the stewardship of their estates, and their estates have been soon exhausted and impoverished, and their cultivators ruined.

"This population, alien to the faith, the institutions, and the destinies of the country it inhabits has remained till our own time attached, like a

devouring leprosy, to the soil. * * * The men wear a long black cafetan tied round the waist by a girdle of the same colour,—boots, and breeches. Their head is entirely shaven, with the exception of two locks of hair upon the temples, which fall upon their cheeks, and mingle with the beard. On the bare head they wear a black calpac, and on this calpac a broad-brimmed hat, or a cap bound with a broad belt of fox or wolf skin. The women wear upon the head a handkerchief folded like a turban. The married hide their hair beneath their head-gear, the unmarried let it hang in long tresses down the back. This costume would be picturesque enough, if it were not, as it is, made up of tattered rags, disgustingly filthy. The beauty of the women—that beauty of the hereditary and ineffaceable eastern character—is lost beneath their dirt and the insignia of their misery. * * *

In the towns, the Jews are excluded from the coffee-houses, and from all public promenades and gardens. If they journey by a public conveyance, any traveller is at liberty to turn them out. To restrain them from smuggling, they are not allowed to establish themselves closer than within three leagues of the frontier; at Cracow they are banished to the other side of the Vistula, and on

holidays they must not open their shops till after mid-day, nor quit the quarter of the town without a special permission. One Sunday I had taken a Jew, who acted as *valet de place* in my hotel, to show me over the city. In the middle of the street he was stopped by a soldier, who summoned him to show his permission. The Jew had neglected to procure one, and was carried off.

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"This fidelity to traditional customs, this respect for the external signs of their nationality, the painful constraint in which they live, and the contumely with which they are treated, would awaken in their favour a lively feeling of interest and compassion, if they did not themselves destroy it by the perfidious treachery of which they have been guilty on important occasions; by their daily habits of theft and knavery, and by their own contentedness with their degraded position, whenever they can succeed in amassing a few florins."

Marmier, who writes in an affected tone of liberalism, here comes to the same illiberal conclusion as others have done with respect to the Russian peasantry. "Long oppression," say these philanthropists of the nineteenth century, "has profoundly degraded them; and now, because they

are so degraded, they are unworthy of being relieved from such oppression."

Several Poles, and amongst other M. Cynski, hastened to publish their dissent with Marmier's doctrine.

Mr. Kubakiewicz, not a passing traveller, but born and brought up in the country settled by this people, says of these Austro-Polish Israelites :—

"They are active, laborious, religious, and intelligent. Notwithstanding political and civil bondage, and a degree of misery of which no idea can be formed in the rest of Europe, they are animated by feelings of humanity and a love of liberty. I never in my life saw a German, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, give alms or any kind of aid to a poor Pole. Jews, on the contrary, may often be seen assisting unfortunate Poles and giving them shelter. Their love of liberty is so great that they prefer starving to tilling the earth, thereby submitting to the *kanczuk* (whip) of the landlord, and to the labour rank, which blunts all human feeling, and brutalises the masters of the soil even more than the peasantry.

"The extreme misery in which they live renders them knaves, and they are easily corrupted by the spoliating government, often serving them as spies, as all the Austrian Germans do in Gallicia."

The remark of Mr. Kubakiewicz applies to a large proportion of the Germans throughout the Russian empire.

The author has endeavoured to show elsewhere, what long oppression has made the Russian and Polish serf. The Polish Jew has not only undergone during half a century, the same oppression at the hands of the Russian authorities, but having become an agent between the landlord and his tenantry, the governing and the governed, has drawn on himself, in addition, the contempt and hatred of the peasantry; at the same time that the prejudice of the Russian sovereigns has rendered him a peculiar mark for the persecution of their servants.

Hence, though the peculiar cunning of the Hebrew enables him somewhat to ward off the accumulated evils which assail him, he has still through many concurring causes, undergone a course of treatment more demoralising than even the Polish or Russian peasantry. Now the abasement of the Polish peasant is redeemed by his love and pride of country; but degraded as the Hebrew is in character, he is not more corrupted than the Russian by a less degree of oppression, in the same manner that the character of the Russian is under more unfa-

vourable circumstances, unquestionably superior to that of the German settlers in the Russian empire.

The Jews are excluded from Russia Proper, and most strictly from the capitals. Sir Moses Montefiore, for instance, could only be allowed to set foot in St. Petersburg by special permission. In southern Russia, and those parts where they are admitted, they are legally excluded from the chief cities, in which they only contrive to remain by bribing governors and officials. They are subject to peculiar taxes and burthens. These were at first imposed on the plea of their being a substitution for that military service which the Jews consider even more onerous than the heaviest pecuniary impositions. The Emperor Nicholas has not only increased these impositions, and multiplied the restrictions which his servants use as a means of extortion, but he forces the Hebrews to serve in his armies, causes their youth to be seized, and sent as recruits, chained in gangs, to the depôts, where they are forced to eat unclean meats, and frequently baptised to that Russo-Greek faith, of which the chief merit is, in the eyes of the Russian emperor, that he is its spiritual head. In Poland and the Polish provinces, this persecuted people has long been obliged to decree in its synagogues general

fasts, and that the value of the food saved should be collected for the purpose of bribing various of their persecutors. Avarice and necessity, in the long run, learned, however, too well to conceal the little, rapacious avidity had spared. The wrath of the Tsar was then heated, till he issued his impracticable edict for the immediate transplantation, hundreds of miles away, of hundreds of thousands. Partially put into execution, this ordinance served as a pretext for wholesale depredation; and when nothing more was left of which to despoil the Jewish population, the emperor's servants humbly represented, that, on account of famine, &c., it was impossible at present to fulfil his imperial decree, without entailing serious charges on the imperial treasury.

Four years' respite have, in consequence, been given to these hapless children of Israel; by which time, it is probably calculated, that the property of the tribe may again have accumulated to a tangible degree, like the fleece upon a shorn sheep's back. Such is the condition of this persecuted race in the Russian dominions. It is better in Prussia; but even there, unworthy of a civilised government. The Jew pays heavy and peculiar taxes. These were originally imposed when

he had nothing to do with husbandry, as a substitution for the burthen weighing on agriculturists; and now the government seeks to drive him to cultivate the soil, from which it is impossible for him to derive a living with the double charge of a tax as agriculturist and as sectarian.

Many painful disabilities weigh upon him, and the governors encourage the prejudice of the governed against him, which is so great that even in western Prussia, the female spectators, in a place of public entertainment, may be seen to shake their garments as if to avoid contamination, after sitting next to a Jew.*

* Many of the Jewish famlies now settled in England, have come, within the memory of the present generation, from Poland. The author has been credibly informed, that at some Jewish meeting, it was proposed to invite the co-religionaries to quit the Russian dominions, in which they are so oppressively treated. This resembles the "vous manquez de pain, eh bien mangez de la brioche," of the French princess. These worthy people judge of Poland as it was when they left it. Such an invitation might as well be addressed to the Siberian convicts. The Tsar has not resolved to root them out from their present abode, to let them enjoy a privilege after which the first nobility in his empire pant, that of quitting it.

Their doom, whenever they are unwilling or unable by pecuniary sacrifices any longer to avert the calamity, is transplantation to desert and inhospitable localities, where they are to till the ground for the Tsar's profit, and breed soldiers for his hosts.

The Jew, like the Russian Moujik and the Armenian, turns all his thoughts to gain; making that acquisition of wealth which other communities regard as a means, apparently the end of his endeavours. Oppression has left no other course open to these races but the acquisition of property by thrift and trade; which, when acquired, they have learned not to dare enjoy; it is therefore probable, that there are few nations which, under like circumstances, would not contract a similar bent of mind.

If we could judge of the character of a people by analogy with a very distant past, the history of the Jews before their expulsion from Palestine would rather tend to prove that the genius of traffic and commerce was far from being inherent in this people. The ancient Hebrews were husbandmen and shepherds, but not traders. At all events, in the present age, they are distinguished from those who share with them their characteristic love of gain and barter, by the intellectual tendency of the pursuits they mingle with it. The author has had occasion to observe how large a proportion of the distinguished men of Germany are of the Jewish family. In Poland, both from their social condition and from that of the country, they have little or no op-

portunity of directing these intellectual tendencies into any but the crotchetty channels of a superstition gravely frivolous. Nevertheless, these men live chiefly in an ideal world, and herein differ from the Muscovites and Armenians. The Jew, who may be seen filling the most abject offices to which men are tempted by the love of lucre—who doles out brandy glass by glass through the livelong day, exchanging it for the last rags of the besotted peasant whom he lures to ruin,—this man, whose whole soul seems to a superficial observer inaccessible to any emotion but the love of gain, is looking forward to the silent hours of night for his recreation. When his hovel or his shop is shut, he applies himself with enthusiastic delight to the Gemara, or commentaries on the Talmud, with their quaint sophistries and wonderful traditions, or he plunges deep into the Zohar, the Chaldaic book of the magic Cabala. Of this he strives to master the difficulties through intensity of study, in the ambitious hope of some day—like the astrologers and followers of the black art of old—divining the secrets and commanding the powers of nature. The humble dealer who hawks some article of clothing, or some old piece of furniture about the streets—the obsequious mass of animated

filth and rags which approaches to obtrude offers of service on the passing traveller, is perhaps deeply versed in Talmudic lore, or aspiring in nightly vigils to read into futurity, to command the elements, and to acquire invisibility.

Notwithstanding the avidity attributed to him, the Polish Jew, however much he may treasure material wealth, places a far higher value upon that of mind, according to his peculiar appreciation of it. For the wealthiest Jew who would never consent to a family alliance with a Christian prince, feels honoured by its contraction with the poorest of his tribe who is learned in Hebrew lore. Many of the Polish Jews—alone perhaps of any in Europe—when they can accumulate the means and make their escape, repair to end their days or to settle in the land of promise of their fathers.

There is another singular fact connected with this strange people: Hated and despised by the lowliest of the nation amongst whom its fate is cast,—exposed to the oppression of those most oppressed,—ground to the dust by the extortion of the Russian official, and helplessly recipient even from the Russian private of the indignities heaped upon him by his superior,—still this people devoutly believes itself the chosen of Jehovah—

suffering indeed temporary chastisement for its sins, but to whom nevertheless the wide earth has been given as a heritage to which the children of Israel have an exclusive and inalienable right.

In pursuance of this conviction, the Polish Hebrews, in the midst of poverty, oppression, filth and squalor, have long since magnificently portioned out between them, the houses, castles, palaces, broadlands and forests, in the actual possession of the Gentile. This assumed right descends from father to son, and is saleable from one to another of their race. This partition of the land in which they only dwell by cruel sufferance, appears at first sight nothing but a puerile illusion. Practically, however, it acquires a reality often singularly detrimental to the interests of the owners of property thus divided. The sale and agency of estates has fallen in a great measure into the hands of the Hebrews, who, though poor, as a body still constitute the chief capitalists, and hold and control the circulating medium. Hence, when a Polish noble or his Russian spoiler seek to sell an estate, a house, or any real property, it sometimes suffers an immense depreciation because the chief purchasers and negociators of purchases, being Hebrews, often dare not bid for property which they

consider to belong to one of their tribe, who has not chosen to sell or transfer to them his supposed hereditary right; so that it falls in the market to a part of its real value. For aught he knows, the palace inhabited by the prince of Warsaw, and its very household furniture, belongs to some Isaak or Levy, who crosses the street to shun the brutality of the very private who stands like an automaton sentry at the Russian proconsul's gate. Under certain circumstances he and his government may laugh to scorn this pretension, as a quaint and frivolous conceit; but if the palace could be put up for sale, or if, as eventually may happen, the building materials or the furniture should be publicly sold by auction, then the right of Isaak or Levy, its mysterious proprietor, may tell in a singular depreciation of their price.

This singular assumption is called the Chazak, and has vainly been attempted to be suppressed through stringent laws by the government.

The Polish Jews may be divided into four principal sects, the Talmudic Jews and the Chassidim, who believe in the Talmud, and the Caraites and Frankists who reject it. The Talmudic Jews, of the same faith as those inhabiting western Europe, constitute the immense majority, and next (chiefly

in the Polish provinces incorporated with Russia) come the Chassidim.

The ordinary Talmudic Jews believe not only in the Old Testament, but in the Talmud. The Talmud is, however, divided into two very distinct portions, consisting, firstly, of the pharisaical Mishna, supposed to have been written about sixteen centuries back by Judah the saint, and to contain the laws and institutions given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and transmitted orally with the traditions and explanations of the prophets and elders down to Judah. Secondly, of the two Gemaras, or commentaries upon the Mishna, the first written by Rabbi Jochanan, about two centuries afterwards, and forming with it the Talmud of Jerusalem; the second by Rabbi Asce, and called the Talmud of Babylon.

Now the two Gemaras, the offspring of exile and of persecution, breathe nothing but hatred and malignity to the Goim or Gentiles. It is probable that, under the peculiar circumstances in which the Jews have been placed, a bitter antipathy and strong and exclusive spirit of caste could alone have enabled a people thus scattered and defenceless to pass unchanged and unabsorbed through so many centuries of admixture, and through collision with so many

races. At least we find this to have been equally entertained by the gipsies, the only other example in Europe of a tribe retaining through ages, in the midst of other nations, its distinctive peculiarities.

As the persecution of law, prejudice, and custom has ceased to pursue the Hebrews, so they appear gradually to have relinquished the most illiberal portions of their written law. In Holland, England, and some parts of Germany, they lay chief stress upon the Mishna, even where not questioning the sanctity of the Gemara, but in many instances reject the Talmud altogether. In France, where both law and public opinion give them equal right and standing with the remainder of the people, the Jews are rapidly amalgamating with it. But if in France they verify the moral of the fable in which the traveller is throwing off his cloak in the mildness of the sun's rays, in Eastern Europe they recall the same wayfarer, wrapping his mantle only more closely round him, when assailed by the wind and rain. In Poland both the Talmudic Jews and the more pretentious sect called Chassidim, not only prefer the Mishna to the Bible, but the Gemara to either; comparing the Bible to water, the Mishna to wine, the Gemara to an aromatic liquor.

The sect of Chassidim, or "very holy," may be considered as a morbid offspring of the anti-social tendency of the religious belief to which persecution has given birth in the votaries of the Gemaras. It was founded about eighty years ago in Volhynia, by Israel (called) Balshem, at a period when the Jews began to feel oppression increase; and has chiefly been perpetuated and extended in Russia, and in the Russo-Polish provinces, where it weighs most heavily.

The Chassidim, devout readers of the Zohar, have recent commentaries by their own rabbis, which they add to the preceding Talmuds, more filled with superstitious sophistries, and inculcating greater hatred to the Gentiles than even the Gemaras.

The written tenets of this sect are some of them so monstrous, that it can only be fairly ranked with those springing up of recent years like poisonous fungi in the same hot-bed—the Russian empire.

To give some idea of its doctrines, it may suffice to state, that Israel Balshem, its founder, in his book Likute Amumiv, declares, that with faith man may not only be saved, whatever his deeds, but furthermore inculcates the commission of the most

heinous crimes, as bringing him nearer to the Supreme Being; because supposing the Creator and his creatures ranged in a scale represented by a circle, and removed from him by each degree of crime, so that at length the farthest in the ring comes to be nearest.

The two sects who reject the Talmud, the Caraites and Frankists, differ strangely in character,—the former being probably the most scrupulous, moral, and religious community in existence, the latter, the most corrupt even of the Polish Jews. The Frankist tenets originated with a certain Jacob Frank, near the middle of last century: about the same period that the doctrines of the Chassidim were broached. Both alike the offspring of oppression, offer striking illustrations of the distinct effects it produces,—fanaticism in the instance of the Chassidim, and hypocrisy in that of the Frankists.

The Frankists reject the Talmud, and recognise only the Bible as their rule of faith, but at the same time they consider it both lawful and praiseworthy to deceive the Goim, or Gentiles, by ostensibly professing the dominant religion, whilst secretly adhering to their own. The extent of such a sect can of course never be known, but that it is considerable does not admit of doubt.

It has been furthermore proved, that these Jews, professing Christianity, are to be found filling the offices of its ministry; and there have been discovered, and probably to this day exist, Frankists amongst the Catholic and Lutheran church dignitaries of Russian, Austrian, and Prussian Poland.

The Caraites can hardly be termed a sect, since having probably followed uninterruptedly the Mosaic faith and doctrine before the traditions of the Talmud were even orally engrafted on it. They have been supposed to descend from the Scribes, who adhered only to the written law, and followed it to the letter. The Caraites, who emigrated some centuries since from Turkey, or who have been overtaken in the Crimea by the progressing frontier of the Russian empire, speak amongst themselves a dialect of the Turkish or Tartar, instead of German, like the other Polish Jews. They are chiefly to be found in Volhynia and Lithuania, and are distinguished by their addiction to husbandry, and by that rigid probity which the Quakers affect amongst ourselves. The scrupulous honesty of the Caraite Jew is inded so universally recognised that his simple word is more valued than the oath or bond of any other class of men. Unhappily, the Caraites form but a small portion of the He-

brew community in Poland. The future fate of the remainder long constituted in the prospective arrangements of Polish patriots and philanthropists, a difficulty as harassing as that of Ireland to British, or of the slave population to American statesmen. The Jews are, undoubtedly, in one way, as much a curse to Poland, as Ireland, in another, to Great Britain. The mischievous part which the former now play in Poland, originates, like the turbulence of Ireland, in long cruelty and injustice practised towards them. Both have been made what they are through ill-treatment, a consideration which should alone induce those at whose hands they have suffered oppression to regard with indulgence its retributive consequences, if even to bear with these were not, as it is, an inevitable necessity. Poland can no more rid itself of two millions of Jews, than Great Britain of Ireland. The present state of those unhappy sojourners in the midst of a strange race, forms a social leprosy, tending still further to disease the afflicted body of the nation amongst whom thew dwell. The removal of the contagious evil which their abasement constitutes, must necessarily prove one of the first conditions of the regeneration of Poland. Experience has proved that this cannot be done by

persecution or severity; but the example of the Jews in France and other western countries, proves, that the removal of disabilities, and the extinction of prejudice, to which such a course conduces, effects that which the violent ukases of a Russian emperor cannot do, by making Judaism the harmless religious opinion of a portion of the people, instead of an injurious distinction of race, rendering it a congregation of aliens and enemies established in the heart of a nation.

The Poles, who, to do them justice, proved themselves, up to the time of the extinction of their independence, on the whole, the most tolerant of their contemporaries, cannot be charged with intolerance, but rather with neglect towards the Hebrews. It must not be, however, forgotten, that the nobility and the clergy, who alone had any share in the government of the state, had only been brought to emancipate the Polish peasantry, a few months before the downfall of the national independence. It was natural that they should first turn their attention to their own people, who were far more in need of relief than the Hebrews. Since that period, when stopped on the very threshold of progress, Poland has never enjoyed any but partial and temporary independence, namely,

during the existence of the grand duchy of Warsaw, for a few years; the revolution of 1831, for a few months; and the recent insurrection of Cracow, for a few days.

In each of these intervals the emancipation of the Jews was discussed, and in 1846, at Cracow, the removal of all disabilities, and a fraternal equalisation of their rights with those of the Polish people, was one of the first acts of a government, which should, perhaps, rather be termed transitory than provisional.

The despotisms which have partitioned Poland between them, and kept the bulk of its population in the condition of the middle ages, as regards the Jews, have behaved still more cruelly, by rendering their treatment far worse than it had ever been in Poland since they sought refuge in it centuries ago from the persecution of the crusaders.

The feeling and the prejudice of the masses, who do not readily inquire beneath the surface, is naturally enough against the Hebrews. Rigid adherents as we have seen to the most exclusive portion of the Talmud, the bulk of the Polish Jews looked on with indifference in the often recurring struggles between the Poles and their oppressors. Considering both as infidels, they outraged Polish patriot-

ism, by serving whoever paid them, and betraying whoever they were paid to betray; whilst the most frequent and liberal customers for their services were the enemies of the nation.

The enlightened classes of the Polish people, however, who alone are likely to influence its conduct, are unanimous in the opinion that it is urgent to relieve this people from the oppression which has so cruelly accumulated upon them under the Russian rule.

All parties are agreed on the expediency of giving equal civil rights to the Jew as well as to the peasant. Some, indeed, are for withholding political equality, as in England, from those professing this faith, but the majority would make equality of political rights optional or conditional on the acceptance of political duties. Thus they propose to render the Jew eligible to any office in the state, and to give him a share in its representation, providing he contribute personally to defend it. It is also satisfactory to find, that, if slowly, the Hebrews have progressively been exhibiting signs of identifying their interests with those of the nation. To this result, two concurring causes—the unendurable nature of Russian oppression, and the feeling manifested towards them at different times by the Polish insurrection-

ary leaders—may alike have led; but it has been abundantly proved by the support they have given the recent attempt to shake off the yoke. The significance of this support is nowise impaired by the treachery and denunciation of patriots by those amongst the Jews who have not yet merged their general antipathy to the Gentiles in individual hatred to the Russian rule,—a class which its severity is calculated daily to diminish.

In Austrian Poland, 340,000, or one-sixth of the whole Israelito-Polish population, is located. The Jews inhabit exclusively several towns, and people entirely the city of Biody upon the Russian frontier. As a body they are poorer than even in Russia. They are, it is true, allowed to exempt themselves from military service, on paying £30, but are so oppressively taxed as to keep them in a state of hopeless misery. Over and above all other taxes, they are made to contribute a million and a half of florins, or one-seventh of the whole revenue of Gallicia, as a tax on *cosher* (permitted meat) and sabbath candles. When one Jew cannot pay, the congregation must pay for him; and when one congregation is ruined, as frequently happens, by the enormous expenses which distress for taxes entails, adjacent congregations must pay the whole

amount between them. The Russian authorities are allowed to strip the Jews of every tangible property, and consequently little remains to the share of the emperor. In Austria, where matters are more skilfully managed, a far larger share of the Hebrew spoil is gathered into the imperial coffers, and the agents of authority have less opportunity of extortion. There are, however, several imperial ordinances which afford them a rich harvest; and amongst others, one declaring all Jewish marriages illegal where both parties have not obtained permission by proving their ability to read and write in the German language. The poverty of this people prevents ninety-nine couples out of a hundred from obtaining this instruction, but when a couple marry according to their own rite, as usually happens, without this permission, on discovery of the fact they are punished for disobedience; and when it cannot be proved, for immorality. The husbands are flogged with sticks, the wives with rods; each is sent back to his or her respective parish, and the children taken from them are placed in asylums, where they almost invariably die of neglect and misery. Such is the conduct of the Austrian cabinet towards the Jews, though it must be admitted that its sovereigns

have shown none of that personal antipathy or insulting illiberality which has been evinced by Nicholas and Frederick William of Prussia. On the contrary, the late emperor Francis has been known to pray for three-quarters of an hour together in a synagogue; a proceeding which has given rise to the rumour that the princes of the house of Hapsburg are Jews of a sect analogous to that of the Frankists, of which a prototype existed some centuries back in Spain, and which may elsewhere, and in an earlier age, have been called into existence by like causes. Several chronicles and old writings inimical to the Hapsburgs, reproach them with being Jewish pedlars, who settled in Switzerland in the ninth century.*

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* The works of the Abbé Chiaryni, professor of oriental languages in the university of Warsaw, and translator of the Talmud, throws ample light on modern Judaism.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Austrian empire—the second great European despotism—comprises beneath its rule a larger number of Sclavonians than any state excepting Russia. Twenty millions of its subjects out of thirty-eight are computed to belong to the various branches of this family, besides Magyars and Italians, whilst the Germanic is the least important of its constituent elements. The Austrian government appears, upon examination, so complete an absolutism that it is difficult for those unacquainted with the Russian autocracy to conceive anything more arbitrary. There exist, however, between these two despotisms, considerable distinctions, due less to any difference in the spirit animating them, than to the social condition and historical antecedents of the people over whom their rule extends.

The Russian empire is a structure raised on the basis of popular submissiveness, oriental in its

character and origin, since deduced in its political and religious features from the levelling cruelty of the Tartar, and the corruption of the Greek of the lower empire. In 1846, it is scarcely yet in anything but externals European, and in the space of a century and a half has had infused into it very little more of the real spirit of western civilisation, than such rulers as Mehemet Ali or Runjeet Singh had, by the labours of a single life, instilled into the populations of Egypt or the Punjaub. It could never probably have been raised to such intensity, never certainly have retained its characteristic peculiarities, if established over a western people, or perhaps any other unprepared for its reception by preceding centuries of oriental misrule. It must be regarded therefore as of an entirely Asiatic stamp, combining the oppressive violence of the eastern despots with the barbaric centralisation and demoralising order of the Chinese empire. It is difficult to compare things utterly dissimilar, whether good or evil. This is the case with the Russian and Austrian despotisms, the one being Chinese and Mongolian, the other European, and consequently far less hideous, notwithstanding its deformity. The Austrian government would have been Russian if planted on a Russian soil, trampled

down long since to a convenient level, but it has grown propped upon many obstacles, which the Tsars of Russia rooted out—an independent church, an aristocracy, a burgher class, and a host of distinct nationalities, all elements which it might separately have destroyed, but of which it has in some measure been forced to respect the existence, because its own depends on skilfully playing off the interests of one class or race against the other.

This necessity has proved, and proves some check on the conduct of the government, which has shown itself as cruel, faithless, and obscurantist as any on record; and which, though European in its character, seems in the nineteenth century to combine the arbitrary injustice of the days of star-chambers and *lettres de cachet* with the cold-blooded disregard of life and suffering, mysterious forms and Machiavelian perfidy of the Venetian state, or of the Italian politicians of the middle ages.

It is true, that within the pale of the Austrian empire, some of the many distinct nations of which it is compounded still retain franchises which even Prussia does not tolerate, and which appear to contain, as probably they do, the germ of constitutional institutions. The Hungarian and Croatian enjoy a considerable degree of self-administration

and liberty of speech, which they are not slow to use, and the Tyrolese, privileges which Prussia would not dream of according to its subjects.

The Austrian government differs from that of Russia, which seeks to be obeyed through terror, and covets in its subjects the moral prostration of the Asiatic. Austria would rather unobtrusively control contented subjects, concealing if possible that yoke of which it has no intent of lightening the weight. In those parts of the empire wherein it is not afraid of the wealth of its subjects, it makes every effort to secure its material prosperity. In the capital, it has rendered the Viennese the most frivolous people in the world, by encouraging an exclusive taste for amusement, whilst at the same time it guards against scarcity and indemnifies trades, such as the butchers and bakers, to avert the discontent even of classes. Strangers in Austria, who principally visit Vienna, who see the country progressing in prosperity, railroads, navigation, manufacturing industry arising in every direction, come to the natural conclusion, that the government, which renders the governed thoughtlessly contented, by providing for its wants and pleasures, is, in a great measure, entitled to call itself paternal, as it does.

The prosperity of the empire is concentrated in the German grand duchy of Austria, the prosperity of the grand duchy of Austria in Vienna, whilst the natural levity and acquired awe of its inhabitants, the secrecy of its police, and the depths of its dungeons, conceal the mass of Vienna's miseries from the traveller's eye and ear, though he may frequently hear through the walls of places of detention the cries of those undergoing the severity of the authorities.

But though even Vienna is calculated to convey to a minute observer a sad idea of Austria, the remainder of the empire, though almost everywhere more favoured by nature, must not be judged by the standard of Vienna. In the provinces, the natural resources, and the happiness and civilisation of the people are cramped in the development by the nature of the government, which there assumes a shape which recalls the gloomy tyranny of the dark ages, with the open cruelty of their feudality, the hidden barbarities of their dungeon keeps, and the treachery of their secret assassinations; recalling those times of violence and guile in everything but the knightly chivalry and princely generosity which occasionally illumined their darkness; though as far as Austria is concerned, it

would be perplexing to point to any age in which these brighter qualities were manifested—from the days of the craven archduke who kidnapped our own Cœur-de-Lion, to the imperial murderer of Wallenstein.

In the very brief space which the limit of these volumes allow, it is impossible for the author to enter into the details requisite to unmask the self-styled paternal government of the Austrian Kaiser, and this he the less regrets, that Mr. Kubrakiewicz, who long held office in Gallicia and Lodomeria, has just given to the world some interesting revelations on this subject.

To disturb, however, the opinion of those who have taken the mildness of this rule as a recognised fact, and who argue from it the incredibility of the participation of the Austrian government in the atrocities lately committed at its instigation, the author has ventured to cite the three following anecdotes, which briefly illustrate the real character of the paternal rule, as exhibited in its relations alike with the noble, the peasant, and the soldier. The first is personal to Count K., a gentleman of high character, now in England; the other two are contained in the work to which allusion has just been made, and of which M. Kubrakiewicz, the author, was eye-witness.

"When confined in the fortress of Olmutz," says the former of these personages, "I learned from many sources that secret executions were of frequent occurrence, and the assertion was confirmed by the avowal of a lady, a fellow-prisoner, whose husband had lived and died a functionary in it. She related amongst other things, that on the eve of her marriage she had been struck by the sudden melancholy of her intended, called away for a few hours to the presence of the governor, and whose solemn adjuration to her not to press him on the subject still further increased her curiosity, which he obstinately refused to gratify. Many years after, when given over by the doctors, he one day recalled the circumstance to her recollection, and being placed by the hopeless nature of his malady beyond the influence of any fears as to the consequences of indiscretion, confessed the cause of his mysterious depression on their marriage eve. It appears that when admitted to the governor's he found him seated with two other individuals at a table on which was a book and a crucifix. The governor told him with much solemnity that he had been selected to perform a piece of secret service in the emperor's interest, but that it was previously required of him to swear on the crucifix both unhesitatingly to obey

his instructions, and never subsequently to divulge them. The whole appeared so strange and irregular that he declined binding himself by any oath beyond that of allegiance, which he had already as a public servant taken to his sovereign. Hereupon the governor observed to him the consequence of refusal to comply with any portion of the orders given him, which was simply that he would be taken from the room in which he stood and instantly shot for disobedience. Under these circumstances he complied with the preliminary forms, and was then instructed to proceed to a particular spot, where he would find a detachment of soldiers at his disposal. He was to secure certain outlets and then to surround certain dwelling-houses, in which he would find three strangers of whom a minute description was given. Without exchanging a syllable with these three personages, or seeking to learn their names or conditions, he was to convey them in custody to a place, where he would find a priest in waiting. He was to leave them with the priest for the space of one hour, and to have all three blindfolded, shot, and buried in a large grave which he would find ready dug, and this business dispatched, to return immediately and report the fulfilment of his instructions. He cap-

tured the three strangers in the places designated. One was an old, the other was a middle-aged, the third a young man. They met their fate with resignation, the two elder never breathing a word. The youngest, before his eyes were blindfolded, exclaimed: "I have only been eighteen months married, I have a wife and child, and they will never know what has become of me." Finding that the officer repulsed all confidence, he too resigned himself, and they were all three shot and buried, their captor returning to the governor, and being by him dispatched back with what appetite he might to the bridal festivity, which he had quitted a few hours before. This incident remained utterly unknown in the place where it occurred; and he who had played so unwillingly the chief part in it, never, to the day of his death, knew the names, conditions, or offence of his victims.

M. Koubrakiewicz relates the following scene, one out of thousands of such instances, as he observes, but which he selects, because, of the many at which he has been present, it was the first that recurred to his recollection:—

The peasants of Podkamien, in the circle of Zlcow, refused to work more days than was stipulated in the *befehl*.

"Count Cetner, an Austrian noblemen, sent for Mr. Charles Sacher, commissary of the circle, with an escort of dragoons. Mr. Sacher sent for the deputies, who are always the elders of the village, and desired them to obey their lord without reply, and to execute his orders without hesitation. The peasants replied that his demands were unjust, and contrary to the imperial order. 'You have the right of complaint to your lord,' replied the commissary. 'We have been complaining for thirty years, and a deaf ear is turned to our entreaties,' rejoined the deputies; 'we pray only to be allowed to quit the village with our families, and to seek another master.' Without further loss of time, the commissary had the deputies stretched upon the ground one after the other, and the punishment with the stock (cane) by two corporals commenced. Notwithstanding the advanced age of the deputies, of whom the youngest was seventy, they suffered with patient resignation six blows a-piece. During the infliction, the peasants, book in hand, repeated litanies. On the second infliction of twenty strokes each, their fortitude, however, abandoned them; they declared themselves guilty, and submitted to the arbitrary pleasure of their lord."

Apropos of the remark, that, when a criminal is

put to death, or a deserter shot, the body is left upon the place of execution guarded by a sentinel. M. Koubrakiewicz gives elsewhere the following touching scene, which likewise passed under his eyes. He once saw

"A Hungarian woman, who had come from the interior of Hungary with her three children, the eldest six or seven years, the youngest at the breast only four or five months of age. This unhappy creature hoped by her presence to soften Austrian cruelty, to inspire pity, and obtain the pardon of her husband, a deserter. But she deceived herself: he was shot. I saw her fling herself sobbing on his yet warm body, calling him by name,—'Paul, dear Paul!' She shook him and opened his mouth, as if thinking to awaken or restore him to life. Two or three hours after she expired, with her lips pressed, or rather frozen to the lips of her husband, the child who was at her breast sharing its mother's fate. That day the snow fell so abundantly that the three bodies were completely covered with it about two in the afternoon.

"*No one dared offer any assistance to the wife or children, for fear of drawing down upon their heads the wrath of the paternal government!*"

The want of space, but not the want of matter,

forbids to multiply these illustrations of the nature of a despotism, in which the ignorance of the western public has long recognised that assumed paternity of character, which is only true if we regard the government of Austria as a political Saturn. It is difficult that it should be otherwise. The Russian absolutism is characterised by the thirst of extension, and an abstract impatience of all resistance to the would-be man-god in which it is personified; the Prussian despotism, living on from day to day, with anxious solicitude for the morrow, by its profound hypocrisy; but the government of Austria, by its profound avarice and rapacity. At the present day it may be considered to centre in about a hundred powerful families, chiefly German, and in the imperial house of Hapsburg, which monopolises three-fourths of the power divided between the whole. They may be compared, as they have by recent Sclavonic writers, to a company, of which three parts of the shares belong to the reigning family, and which, like the East India Company formerly, is associated for the sole purpose of furthering the interests of the members, by the administration of the populations and lands they have appropriated. There is, however, this difference between the two,

that the commercial far-sightedness of the British merchant princes taught them, for their own interests, to better the condition of their Hindoo subjects, by comparison with what it was under their native princes; and in this foresight that Austrian company is entirely wanting, which, with the aid of highly paid church dignitaries, and of corrupt and servile instruments furnished by three millions of German subjects, oppresses thirty-two millions of Sclavonians, Magyars, and Italians. To effect this, like the other great despotisms of Europe, it is forced to play off the nationalities and prejudices of castes and races against each other; rendering some poor and miserable, in opposition to its own pecuniary interests, for the sake of keeping up the ill feeling and enmities, which, by preventing combination, are a necessary condition of its safety.

The house of Hapsburg is not now what it was. The sceptre of the Austrian Cæsars, which Joseph the Second still wielded with imperial energy, has fallen for the last two generations into the hands of weak and imbecile princes. The late emperor, Francis the First, was distinguished by his falling under lip, by his head bowed upon his chest, his hollow eye and haggard look all bespeaking semi-idiotcy. The present Kaisar, Fer-

dinand the First, is notoriously epileptic and of weak intellect. Both spent their time in frivolous pursuits; the former in making sealing-wax, the latter in turning toys; the inanity of both these sovereigns being only relieved by a maudlin avarice, their chief characteristic. By humouring this foible, by allowing them to count their hoarded treasures, and to live in parsimonious retirement, the minister of the day has succeeded in virtually coaxing the sceptre from their hands; and contented with presiding over their treasury, or Kofkammer, the sovereigns of the holy Roman empire have sunk into the same relative insignificance with regard to their chief servant, as the French kings in the days of the mayors of the palace.

Metternich has long been this Austrian mayor of the palace. He cannot precisely be said to exercise absolute control, because there are in the empire personages whom he is required to conciliate, and interests he is forced to consult. His power may, however, be considered not only far to exceed that of any constitutional sovereign of the present day, but of any of the ministers or favourites who for more than half a century have swayed Russia.

Prince Metternich has undoubtedly shown considerable ability in his time, and played his unscru-

pulous part with more skill than most of his co-temporaries. Nevertheless, his reputation probably exceeds his merits; and is said to have outlived the virility of an intellect impaired by advancing years, though the prestige of his awe-inspiring name is still sufficient to uphold the system which his subtle policy upreared during an earlier period of his long career. In this respect the man in his old age, is typical of the empire over the destinies of which he has so long presided.

Cool, cautious, and uninfluenced alike by any vain glory or considerations of honour, justice, or humanity, which might have deterred him from following the safest and most profitable course; with great means at his disposal, he has risked as little as possible, and therefore has won and lost less than his cotemporary statesmen, who staked more adventurously. His name will notwithstanding go down to posterity as one who has identified himself for five-and-thirty years with the existence of a mighty state, even if his own death be not the signal of its proximate dissolution. Metternich is at the present time probably the only man in Europe besides Louis Philippe, whose individual life is of any public moment. There is, however, this great distinction between them, that whilst the decease of both may

lead alike to eventful changes, in Austria it would be difficult for these not to further the interests of civilisation and humanity, which in France they would endanger.

The Austrian premier, notwithstanding his personal power and importance, has no claims to that species of greatness which history concedes whether for good or evil. He will never rank with Colbert or Pitt, or Louis Philippe, or even with Joseph the Second; because, far from achieving great things with little means, he has not even attempted them with great means; and because, contracted in his views, his policy may be defined as a persevering course of Machiavelian expediency. Austria has morally lost ground in Germany during Metternich's reign, and whilst its foreign subjects have rapidly increased, like the Hebrews in Egyptian bondage, he has never attempted to place the imperial sovereignty on a basis more broad and secure than that on which it rests, and which was found insufficient by Joseph the Second before it had to sustain its present weight. With five or six millions of Germans, ten millions of Magyars and Italians, and twenty mlllions* of Sclavonians, subjects, besides tens of millions of the latter in

* According to the admission of official documents, more probably twenty-three millions.

adjacent territories, he has never taken any steps (as Joseph contemplated) to render this empire Sclavonic; the only means which might possibly have infused fresh life into its decrepitude, and have arrested the process of natural decomposition.

It is probable that this will be attempted, but too late. Count Kollowrath, the rising man in the empire, is a Sclavonian (from Bohemia), and said to be imbued with Sclavonic ideas. It is true that no ties of nationality on the part of Metternich, who is a foreigner; no family prospects on the part of the vizier, whose office cannot be rendered hereditary, gives him any interest in the permanent stability of the empire, whose prosperity only materially interests him as long as he continues to live. A man of exalted mind might, indeed, even under these circumstances, feel ambitious that his work should survive him, but the mind of Metternich is not cast in any extraordinary mould. Far from having made any great efforts to fuse and amalgamate the discordant elements of the empire he governs, far from evincing any solicitude for its future maintenance; with the growing garrulity of age he complacently plumes himself in his conversation on his ingenuity in so nicely maintaining the balance, and appears to consider the insecurity of the fabric which his death will endanger, chiefly in

the light of a fact which exalts his personal consequence.

Clement Wenceslaus von Metternich Winneburg Ochsenhausen—for in these names the Austrian premier rejoices, besides titles for which the author cannot find room in these pages—is a Prussian, whose real name is Ochsenhausen. He is a scion of that disreputable petty German nobility whose offshoots being penniless and idle, seek promotion in every kind of service in Russia and Austria, where they have earned for themselves the contemptuous appellation of "*German vermin.*" It is matter of dispute whether he was born in Westphalia or at Coblentz, and he must be now in his seventy-second or seventy-third year.

He commenced his diplomatic career as secretary of legation at the conference of Rastadt, and was sent to Paris as ambassador at the age of thirty-three, on the signature of peace concluded with France in consequence of the loss of Austerlitz. He rapidly afterwards rose to a pitch of power which enabled him to monopolise alike the authority and state of his nominal master.

Though in every sense of the word a *parvenu*, Metternich spends his acquired wealth with a generosity truly imperial, when compared with the

parsimonious meanness of the last and the present emperor. He has the reputation of being a finished gentleman, is a munificent patron of the fine arts, and encourages profusion and expenditure in strangers and the magnates of the empire who visit Vienna, which hence presents a far gayer spectacle than St. Petersburg, where the narrow-minded jealousy of Nicholas takes umbrage at the wealth or splendour of his slaves.

Prince Metternich is a man who undoubtedly would at any period of his life have resented such usage from his superiors, or even from his sovereign, as all Russian officials must put up with; he would probably, as secretary of legation, have considered as an unpardonable insult, such insignificant propitiatory offerings as the Russian ministers accept; he is probably an honourable man in his private transactions, and too gentlemanlike to compromise his personal veracity in his ordinary intercourse with society; but hence to argue that any credit is to be given to his official assertions, or that in his political acts or solemn declarations he is invariably influenced by any feelings of truth or honour, is an assumption incessantly controverted by facts, and of which the two following circumstances will at once determine the validity.

It is well known in St. Petersburg, that as long

as the Emperor Alexander lived, Metternich received from him a secret pension of forty thousand pounds sterling per annum.* It is not meant to be asserted that Metternich proved himself corruptible, but only venal, as, according to all appearances, it was the Russian emperor whose magnificent bribe he accepted, and not his master whom he deceived.

His political veracity the following anecdote may illustrate. Leopold King of Belgium, whilst the Belgic question was still pending, was in want of a skilful and experienced commander for his armies. Skrynetski, the commander-in-chief of the Polish army, was engaged by him for this purpose. Though Skrynetski is a bigot, and showed as much want of moral and strategetical courage as he did tactical skill and personal bravery; he is acknowledged by all parties as a man of the most strict veracity and unblemished honour. He was detained at Prague at the time he received his appointment, and by the aid of an agent dispatched for that purpose, succeeded in escaping from the Austrian territory.

Metternich, in his vexation at this incident, wrote

* On the accession of Nicholas, the pension, which stood on the same list as three-and-twenty others to the mistresses of Alexander, and his favourites, was discontinued by the new sovereign. When the Polish revolution broke out, Nicholas thought it prudent to pay up all the arrears and restore the private annuity granted by his brother.

a private letter to Leopold, detractive of his new commander, in which he congratulated him on having entrusted his armies to a man who had only come to head them by violating his parole.

This calumny came to the ears of Skrynetski, who wrote to Metternich, branding him as a liar, and declaring that if he could show any parole which he had signed, or bring forward any individual to whom he had passed his word, he would return forthwith into Austrian custody. Metternich could make no answer.

So much for the argument of those who close their ears to all evidence adduced of the recent massacres in Gallicia, and the participation of the Austrian government in them, on the plea of Metternich's denial of the fact, and of the utter impossibility of their believing him, from personal knowledge of his character, capable of sanctioning such acts.

The Austrian empire comprises Hungary and the Tyrol, in which its rule is not quite absolute; Lower and Upper Austria, exclusively German; Styria, where more than half the population is so, and the Lombardo-Venetian states, Bohemia, Austrian Poland, (or Gallicia and Lodomeria), and

the Illyrian and Dalmatian provinces; in all of which, taken at an average, the German element is not even numerically as prominent as in the Russian capital of St. Petersburg.

It has been already observed, that of the Germans in the empire, amounting to less than six millions, little more than three millions inhabit the German provinces of Upper and Lower Austria, and Styria, the remainder being isolated in small colonies or surrounded, as in Bohemia and Moravia, by a preponderating foreign population. It is chiefly from these German subjects that the Austrian despotism draws the civil and military instruments of its government—the great majority of functionaries who hold commissioned rank, or its equivalent, whether in the public offices, or the armies belonging to that nation. The German provinces are the only portions of the Austrian territory for which the dynasty of Hapsburg is national, or the fidelity of whose inhabitants is not questionable. The Austrian government has therefore good reason to conciliate that only portion of its subjects, on whose services it can depend to keep the remainder in subjection.

In its conduct towards Hungary and the Tyrol, Austria is restrained by prudential considerations.

Its cabinet has not yet forgotten that the warlike and fiery Magyars stopped Joseph the Second short in the midst of the projected reforms which he attempted to pursue at the expense of their privileges. It remembers equally the stand made by the Tyrolese mountaineers against the armies of Napoleon, which occupied Vienna. It is therefore comparatively measured in its treatment of the German provinces of the Tyrol, and of the Hungarian kingdom; being anxious to increase the material prosperity of the former, and fearful of openly assailing the franchises of the latter.

The archduchy is growing wealthy and Hungary and Croatia remonstrate boldly with the emperor. But it is not on this account true that the inhabitants of the archduchy have the faintest political rights, nor that the government has aided, or even ceased to impede the development of the magnificent natural resources of Hungary. On the contrary, the steam navigation of the Danube was due to a Magyar nobleman, who carried it through in spite of the opposition of the very government which eagerly opens means of communication to enrich the German provinces. The rule of Austria, everywhere bad enough, differs therefore in its objects, even in the provinces it treats most favourably. Its govern-

ment of the people of the remaining portions of its territory, whom it does not fear to oppress, but only dreads to see prosperous, is pernicious and demoralising in a far greater degree. Unhappily, the inhabitants of the territory which comes within this category, form not the exception to this rule, but the vast majority of the subjects of the Austrian empire.

Whilst hireling writers, or travellers who have only seen Vienna—never conversed but with an official class, and whose remarks are furthermore constrained by their social relations and the civilities they have received, acquiesce in the assumption of paternal solicitude made by the Austrian government, with as much truth as the pretensions of the Prussian cabinet to *enlightened absolutism*; most of its remote provinces present a picture of misery and degradation which is without parallel in western Europe, and can only be exceeded in the Russian dominions.

The fortresses of remote districts are commonly filled with political prisoners, and wherever the mountain fastnesses and the rifles of the Tyrolese, or the *insurrection* (general rising) of the fiery Hungarian Magyars is not dreaded, all opposition or reflection on the conduct of the government, or the rapacity of its agents, is punished by the *carcer*, *carcer durus*, *or carcer durissimus*,

the three modes of punishment, which in the paternal government replace degradation to the ranks, the knout, and Siberia, in the Russian despotism; and which, except in favoured localities, are freely administered. The *carcer* is confinement during which the very name of the victim is often forgotten, so that he remains like the prisoners found in the Bastile, and by the Poles in the Russian prisons, till his name and case are lost and forgotten by the death of his successive jailors. The *carcer durus* is attended with hard-labour; and the *carcer durissimus*, from which death soon relieves the prisoner, is distinguished by the administration of the lash twice a week for life.

If the reader will refer to the narrative of the gentle Silvio Pellico, whose captivity was the *carcer*, he may form some idea of the severities of the two next grades of punishment. Let us now see on what occasions these punishments are administered in the provinces. M. Koubrakiewicz relates, that in Gallicia, Constantine Slowitinski, librarian of the Polish library of Leopol (Lwow or Lemberg), being suspected of liberal opinions and detected in importing a prohibited, perhaps a seditious book, was captured by a body of Lans-dragoons, who surrounded his house and struck his

pregnant wife as she clung to him so brutally with the butt-end of their firelocks, that she expired upon the spot. The librarian was condemned for twenty years *ad carcerem durissimum* —imprisonment with the infliction of the lash twice a week for twenty years.

Vincent Zabolicki and Leon Zalewski were, in 1835, condemned for life to the same punishment, for emancipating their peasantry contrary to law.

To such poverty are the inhabitants of the fertile province of Gallicia reduced by Austrian extortion, that not one of the inhabitants in ten thousand, declares the same authority, had ever seen a four-shilling piece; the government forcing both landlords and peasantry to pay their contributions of corn according to the prices of 1792, though when distraining for taxes it sells this very corn at one-tenth or even one fifteenth of that standard of value. We have seen an example of the violence employed towards the peasantry in the exaction of the *robot*, added to which, he is so heavily burthened as to be reduced to live a portion of the year on green food; let us now examine how the landlord profits by this state of things. The great majority of the noble proprietors live upon black bread. A noble with four thousand acres and fifty families

attached to the glebe cannot often pay the schooling, of his sons. Ninety nobles out of a hundred at least have their estates sequestrated for taxes, and it is not long since a number of the Gallician landholders signed a petition to the emperor, begging him to take their property and to allow them food and raiment, which they cannot afford when the taxes are paid. It is therefore neither the peasantry nor the nobles who profit by the condition of their mutual relations; and though in a pecuniary sense the government loses also by the impoverishment which such a state of society occasions, in another it combines the two advantages of insuring the means of dominion over this territory, and of extorting all the resources it can furnish consistent with such security. It is therefore obvious that the nobles and the peasantry, the serf and his lord, have equal reason to make common cause against the government; but the government, to avert this danger, has long since fostered a state of things calculated to sow dissension between classes whose combination would threaten its authority.

The system pursued resembled that followed by the Russian Tsars, who, like the Austrian Kaisars, set themselves forth both to the world and to their

subjects, as the protectors of the slave and serf against their masters, whilst in reality they have upheld, re-established, or introduced slavery and serfdom, the most powerful agent of that policy of *divide et impera*, characteristic of extensive despotisms. The author has shown elsewhere, and cannot repeat too often, that the Russian Tsar owns twenty-one millions of private slaves; that Alexander introduced slavery into the Polish provinces, which had never before been cursed by anything worse than serfdom; and that Nicholas has reprimanded the nobility of a Russian province for proposing the emancipation of the serf, and introduced serfdom into the kingdom of Poland, where it had been abolished by the constitution. In a like manner the Austrian cabinet, in that portion of Poland which fell to its share, has restored and deeply aggravated serfdom, abolished by the last quatrennial diet of independent Poland.

Having done so, it comes forward, both at home and abroad, like Russia, as a meditator between the peasant and the noble, whose mutually injurious intercourse it has itself advised. Into the history of these machinations of the Austrian government in Gallicia, it becomes necessary to enter at greater

length, because of the recent tragical occurrences in that province, and because of the attempt made by the Austrian premier to mystify the public respecting them.

The kingdom or province of Gallicia and Lodomeria (or rather Halitz, Vlodomir, or Lodomer) is now inhabited by a population computed at about five millions, consisting, with the exception of Jews and Germans, of the three Sclavonic races of Poles, Rusniaks, and Wallacks, in the proportions of about 2,000,000 Poles, 2,000,000 Rusniaks, 300,000 Wallacks, 500,000 Jews, and 80,000 Germans. The Polish population, chiefly Roman Catholic, inhabit the west of this province; the Wallacks, of the Greek faith, the eastern districts, particularly that called the Bukowina. The central districts are inhabited by the United-Greek Rusniaks, intermingled with Poles and Wallacks. The Poles are divided into the Poles of the plain, called Mazourquas, the most depraved of the whole Polish race, and the pastoral inhabitants of the Carpathians, named Gorales, between whom considerable differences of character exist. Gallicia is divided into nineteen circles, and is represented by a diet, by the convocation of which the Austrian

cabinet affects to fulfil the engagements into which it entered in 1815, to give this portion of Poland representative institutions. This diet consists of five estates; the clergy, the magnates, or nobles who have bought Austrian titles, the schlachcic, or untitled nobility, and the burgers. They are only assembled to discuss such measures as refer to the augmentation of the produce of the province, and are not even allowed to petition the emperor without the signature thereto appended of the governor, always a creature of the imperial cabinet, and at the present time the notorious Baron Krieg, an adventurer, who came to Austria with his wallet on his back, rose by infamous secret service, and having married a tailor's daughter, who brought him a dowery of thirty pounds, now that he has risen to power and dignities, banishes her to his kitchen. The majority of the nobility, as we have seen, are reduced to a state of poverty; there is no middle class, unless we take as such the German traders. The peasantry are everywhere in a state of serfdom, excepting always those in the German colonies; for Austria scatters German colonies throughout its non-Germanic provinces, particularly along its frontiers; granting to these favoured communities exemption from taxation and military

conscription, and to their members and other German subjects the monopoly of the sale of grocery, hardware, medicines, &c. The privilege of carrying on any species of trade or manufacture requiring, in these provinces, special permission from the Aulic Council, which must be dearly purchased, and is only accorded to a favoured race. In fact, the Austrian cabinet seems determined that if it cannot prevent the growth of a middle class, it shall be entirely German.

The whole of the Sclavonic peasantry of the three chief races, Poles, Rusniaks, and Wallacks, are in a state of serfdom, and this serfdom consists in their being attached to the soil, with the obligation of labouring from sunrise till sunset for three days a week, in consideration of which *robot*, or labour-rent, the landlord cannot turn his peasant out of his farm; but neither can the peasant leave it without the consent of his proprietor.

This labour-rent and attachment to the glebe is nominally the same as it was established in 1786,—but really there exists this vast distinction, that formerly the peasant could neither be called upon to fight, nor to contribute to the revenues of the state, through direct or indirect taxation; whereas under the Austrian rule he is cruelly taxed and

subjected to tne conscription. Prior to the partition of Poland, its nobles or gentry were violent, hot-blooded, and arbitrary as the chiefs of Highland clans, but the spirit of the West India planter was unknown. Russia, Austria, and Prussia introduced the whip, the cane, and the rods, and the systematic and habitual infliction of degrading punishment. In Austrian Poland the authorities introduced this means of subordination by first submitting to it the more docile German regiments and German settlers; thereby accustoming both nobles and peasants to a sight originally repugnant to the national habits, but which with a little encouragement the landed proprietors soon learned to turn against their serfs.

The robot being from sunrise till sunset, either for a peasant singly or with his team when he possesses one, obliges him in the long summer days to seventeen hours labour; and as he has often to go many miles to perform it, men and cattle are so thoroughly exhausted, that such three days, with the necessary rest, absorb the whole week. The peasant must obtain his ticket from the econome, in the absence of which he is liable to corporal punishment, which it is difficult for him to escape, because his master pays to government a tax of

thirty per cent. on the estimated value of his labour, whether performed or not. Besides this the landlord is charged for the maintenance of the *justiciary* and *mandatarius*, two officers appointed by the crown, but paid by the proprietors; so that in fact sixty per cent. of his income does not suffice to defray these expenses. The Austrian government thus gives the proprietor the facilities of oppression, and having done so takes care he should be cruel, by keeping him ignorant and necessitous. The noble who can scarcely keep his taxes paid, cannot be expected to be merciful to the tenantry by whose labour alone he stands the chance of paying them, and as he is only charged by the Austrian law, tenpence for the heaviest blow, and that he can beside punish the peasant *ad libitum* when his sometimes impossible quota of *robot* is not performed, it can hardly be expected that his conduct should not be oppressive. With diabolic foresight, the government, encouraging real cause of complaint in the peasant against the lord, has contrived to embitter the mutual feeling of these classes, in the very ratio of its own extortionate oppression. It entails on the lord not only the odium of enforcing the conscription, but of levying taxes. The justiciary and mandatarius whom he is obliged to pay,

and in security of whose salary government holds a mortgage of one-eighth its value upon all land, make him responsible for the government exactions, and at the same time appear in the character of ostensible protectors of the peasantry. Wherever an augmentation of tax is made, a complaint dismissed, or a surcharge enforced, the proprietor is obliged to do it, but every reclamation and every grievance redressed or attended to, are so in the name of the Kaisar. How is it possible that ill feeling should not thus be generated between the peasant and the noble?

The broad day of enlightenment which has dawned in other countries, has, however, penetrated into Gallicia, in spite of all the efforts of the Austrian cabinet. The serf lords of Austria, like the slave lords of Russia, begin to see how wretchedly inferior is their condition to that of the landed proprietors of free countries. But Austria will not, any more than Russia, allow a general emancipation of the peasantry. Metternich, who casts obloquy on the Polish proprietors, has never repealed, but on the contrary enforced the law which makes penal the enfranchisement of more than a single peasant, and through innumerable formalities renders even the enjoyment of this privilege impracti-

cable.

A noble in Gallicia can only emancipate this one serf after application to the court of the circle, the goubernium, and tribunal of justice, after long delays, expensive forms, the payment of heavy stamps, and the expenses of ruinous commissions.

M. Koubrakiewicz relates one instance in which a village put up for sale offered to buy its own freedom at the upset price, and was refused permission by the Kaisar.

Land cannot be held by any but nobles. This privilege was once extended when the Austrian cabinet, wishing to sell crown lands, sought to enhance their value, but then finding that it would give rise to a dangerous middle-class, it has been since 1819 suspended for the whole of Gallicia, except the vicinity of Lemberg, peopled by Germans; notwithstanding the often repeated request of the nobles that the purchase of land should be open to all classes. The nobles next protested against the *robot* and prayed that it might be commuted into a fixed money-rent, as had been done in the grand duchy of Austria. The Aulic Council ostensibly granted this request, but surrounded the conversion of the *robot* into money by so many tedious and expensive formalities as to render it utterly nugatory.

The diet of Gallicia presented several postulates, or petitions for the removal of these difficulties, but obtained no satisfaction; the government answering, that their request could not be granted till cadastral surveys had been made, which it could not then afford.

Only the year before last (1844), Alfred Potocki (pronounced Potoshki), a Polish duke or vayvoide, count of the holy Roman empire, and of the same family as that Pantaleon Potocki recently shot, in March 1846, at Siedlce, originated in the Gallician diet a petition to the emperor, whereby that body begged his majesty to be allowed to free the peasantry and endow them, as in the grand duchy of Posen, with a portion of the soil on which they were settled, and requesting leave to appoint and send thither a commission to report upon the working of the system. The Austrian government evasively appointed a commission to inquire, before it gave its answer, *what means existed of indemnifying it for the loss of the revenue it derived from the robot.* Alarmed at these symptoms, it increased in vigilance, and left no means untried to prevent the reconciliation imminent between the lord and the peasant, whom it had estranged. To excite the fears of the nobility and create a diversion, it encouraged the spread of communistic doctrines,

which were zealously preached by hearty and enthusiastic agents from abroad, with whom the government did not interfere. But here a fresh danger threatened the authority of the Kaisars. The Polish nobility of Gallicia were animated on the one hand by a patriotic feeling so strong, and on the other reduced to such a condition that communism appeared to them as a body preferable to the rule of the stranger. This has been peculiarly the case with the rising generation, carried away by the example of some of the wealthiest of their number, who declared their willingness to abandon their possessions, if independence were only thus to be thus achieved. The impetuous character of the Polish people, and the increasing severity to which the suspicions of the three governments led, hastened prematurely the recent attempt to throw off the triple yoke, which has proved thus far abortive, but can only be considered as one of the first convulsions of an inevitable series, which must terminate in the bursting of the mighty volcano, heaving with the accumulated wrongs of millions, and whose discharge must overwhelm, destroy, or dismember those three guilty despotisms, whose existence in the nineteenth century is a blot on its civilisation, and a reproach to Europe.

Of this untoward event Metternich took advan-

tage. The government disbanded all the soldiers it had been able to corrupt, after four, instead of eight years' service, and sent them to disseminate amongst the peasantry, (preparing to rise at the summons of their lords against the stranger,) "that the sole object of the nobles, in the event of success, was to increase the robot, and reduce them to still deeper servitude."

The justiciary and the mandatarius, who had always appeared in the light of protectors to the peasant, confirmed this report, and issued proclamations offering in some instances a thousand, but in many one hundred florins for the capture of rebels named, if taken alive; two hundred if dead; and ten florins for the heads of all other live, twenty for the heads of all dead rebels. A band of the crown peasants, under the command of the infamous Colonel Benedik, were formed into free corps, one half of which consisted of disbanded soldiers and Austrian agents in the disguise of peasants. The peasantry were speedily led away by their example.

With all the long-brooding animosity against the nobles roused by the report of their intended treachery, with the temptation of appropriating the lands and property of their masters, with the lure as prizes in this bloody lottery, in which there were no blanks, of twenty and even a hundred pounds,

to men who had never seen a four-shilling piece, with the security from punishment afforded by imperial sanction, these misguided boors were easily led to join the destroying column. Drunk with excitement, blood, and brandy, they hurried from one scene of massacre and devastation to another, murdering indiscriminately the families of the nobles. The whole of Europe is still ringing with these sanguinary butcheries, perpetrated in the name of an imbecile sovereign, through the premeditation and at the undoubted command of his minister. The most moderate accounts state at eight, others at fifteen hundred, the number of these victims of gentle blood—men, women, and babes at the breast. Nothing can be more hideously revolting than some of the pictures given of families upon their knees, whilst the besotted assassins interrupted them in their last prayer, saying,—"Come! come! the Kaisar has bought your heads! we are waiting for them!"

The fact that prices were set upon the heads of the rebels, leaving to the peasantry to determine who belonged to that category—that the Austrian authorities offered and paid a price temptingly high, and obviously calculated to instigate to murder by valuing the living at only half the dead captive, does not admit of doubt. It

is equally indubitable that these authorities long continued to pay the diminished price when the reward was claimed, for tens, scores, and hundreds of assassinations—that they then reversed the order of their reward, paying more highly for the live than for the dead noble, and finally discontinued it. This price of blood was first set at twenty, then at ten, at five pounds, and at length as low as four shillings per murder. Of these atrocities the author has received private and incontestible evidence; independent of which, the account of this frightful participation of the imperial authorities in the guilt of the boors has come from as many and as various sources as the intelligence of any insurrection having taken place at all.

The organs of the Austrian cabinet, the *Austrian Observer*, the *Augsburg Gazette*, and the *Frankfort Journal*, and Metternich himself, admit these savage murders. The only official notice of them taken by a sovereign with three hundred thousand soldiers under arms, is in a proclamation, dated 12th of March 1846, in which he, or rather Metternich in his name (for the imbecility of Ferdinand must be alike exempted from praise and blame,) proclaims to these men reeking with innocent gore, "that his heart longs to thank them." In another proclamation of the same date

addressed to the arch-duke Ferdinand, he says that the instruments of these massacres "have acquired thereby rights to my satisfaction."

In the face of such proofs, the Austrian agents did not at first attempt to deny the offers of blood-money by the Austrian authorities, but simply palliated this proceeding as one legal and customary towards deserters, which had in this instance been employed against the rebels. The horror which these accounts excited in Europe taught Metternich the necessity of a disavowal. This refutation reposes against a mass of presumptive evidence on Metternich's *ipse dixit*. It is contained in a document in which that minister reproaches the nobles with a state of things whose continuance the public acts of the Gallician diet prove to be owing solely to the imperial cabinet, and in which he brands as a preposterous calumny, originating with the president of the revolutionary government of Cracow, the offers of money for the patriot heads. The reader, who has not, like the author, before him, the evidence of an officer in the Austrian ranks, and who has no opportunity of perusing the numerous confirmatory letters received by the Polish emigrants from relatives upon the spot, may, however, be the less inclined to disbelieve, according to his wishes, in the truth of

these widely spread and concurring reports, when informed that documents exist to prove that this kind of proscription is habitual to the Austrian cabinet, though never, until pressed by so great a danger, resorted to upon a scale so frightfully extensive. Official proclamations were issued on the occasion of the attempted insurrection of Zalivski, of which an account will be found in the first volume of this work, and offering sums of money for the capture, dead or alive, of the insurgent leaders. Zalivski, who still lingers in an Austrian dungeon, and whose wife and child are supported from the scanty means of the Polish emigration, was betrayed for this reward.

Furthermore, copies exist in Paris and London of a public document, dated Lemberg, 29th Feb. 1846, and signed, not by secondary officials, whose conduct the government might repudiate, but by the supreme authority of the province, the Archduke Ferdinand, a prince of the imperial blood, wherein that scion of the house of Hapsburg offers a thousand florins for the arrest, dead or alive, of either Wiszniowski (*alias* Zagorsky) or of Dembrowski (*alias* Borkowski), who were both captured in consequence.

Official proofs of the internal cruelty of absolu-

tisms are impossible. If Metternich had chosen utterly to deny that any disturbances had taken place in Poland at all, it would have been impossible to have furnished more or better proofs of the insurrection and massacres, than have been adduced of the instigation by the Austrian authorities to the deeds of blood alluded to.

If a thousand letters confirmatory of the fact had reached London and Paris, who would dare to expose their correspondents to the wrath of the government by citing them by name? The press can publish nothing in Austria, without the sanction of the censorship, and we are told that the testimony of the victims who escape is too suspicious to be received in evidence!

From the same accounts, corroborative of main particulars, though flowing through distinct and innumerable channels, we learned the attempt at insurrection, and the Gallician massacres. They are unanimous in the terrible accusation which sinks the Austrian minister to the level of a Marat and a Robespiere; and we can no more palliate his conduct by supposing it to have resulted from the momentary impulses inspired by a great and sudden emergency, than we can believe him to have been unconscious or innocent of these murders, because we see deliberate premeditation in the diabolical

foresight and Machiavelian art with which their immediate causes had been prepared. The author can only add, that this guilty participation is as distinctly proved to him as the existence of any disturbances whatever.

It is worthy of observation, that the ill feeling between the lord and the peasant has not been fostered in Gallicia only as a check on both.

In the kingdom of Hungary the Austrian cabinet has employed every imaginable art to set the Sclavonic against the Magyar population, and the peasant against the proprietor.

When during the Polish revolution of 1830—1, the chivalrous Magyars anxious to fly to the assistance of Poland, offered to the emperor, through their diet, to march to the relief of that country with a hundred thousand men, the landlords were suddenly alarmed and paralysed by the revolts of their peasantry in different districts, where they burned, massacred and destroyed.

It was everywhere the Greek Sclavonic peasant who had risen against the Roman Catholic or Protestant Magyar, and when put down by the Austrian government, whose turn was served, the revelations of these men as to the instigators of their rebellion were mercilessly silenced by the gibbets, from which they swung by scores and fifties.

This Hungarian kingdom contains all the elements of a state which might become more prosperous and powerful than any on the continent, excepting France and Poland. Undoubtedly, if its resources were properly directed, it might conquer all the remainder of the Austrian empire; and on Hungary, next to Poland—or perhaps in a greater degree than even on Poland—repose the best hopes of enfranchisement and civilisation of that hundred millions of Sclavonians whose caus it has been the object of these volumes to advocate, and perhaps no less the political prospects of thirty-five millions of their German neighbours. These elements are still jarring and discordant, as the barbarous ages have left, and the policy of the Austrian cabinet has striven to maintain them. But they are yearly, and almost daily settling into that harmony which will be at once strength and independence both to Hungary and contiguous territories.

Hungary, inclusive of Croatia and Transylvania, contains nearly the same extent as Great Britain and Ireland of the most fertile and varied territory in Europe, inhabited by at least twelve—or more probably fifteen—millions of people, divided into two chief races, whose interests are identical—the Magyars and Sclavonians.

The Magyars number five millions, and the Sclavonians, (under the names of Slowacks or Sclavonians, Croatians, Wallacks or Wallachians, and Rusniaks,) seventeen-twentieths of the remainder; leaving a residuum of about three-twentieths, of Jews, Germans, and Gipsies.

The Magyars, a people of Turkish or Tartar origin, are one of the noblest and most chivalrous races in Europe. The whole population, which chiefly occupies the centre of Hungary, is divided into Magnates, nobles; and Seignorial, yeomen; alike distinguished by their warlike spirit, hospitality and love of freedom. The Magnates constitute the only continental nobility, which, for wealth and political importance, can be compared with that of England; yet with the exception of some half-dozen families, whom the court of Vienna has corrupted into indifference, they are distinguished as the most ardent and disinterested reformers. The nobles, and those amongst them whose poverty obliges them to resort to the cultivation of their own fields, enjoy a supremacy of privilege and race over the Sclavonic population, which gives them an aristocratic character. The Sclavonians stand chiefly in the light of tenants, labourers, menials, in their relations with the Magyars. They are

mostly of the Greek, or United Greek persuasions; the Magyars divided between Calvinism and Catholicism. The fiery Magyars have been from time immemorial, horsemen, and accustomed to the use of arms—the hussar uniforms and accoutrements of all armies being copied from their national costume, like that of lancers from the dresses of the Polish nobles. They rose in menacing rebellion when Joseph the Second attempted to abrogate those privileges, which had survived the incomplete tyranny of the middle ages, and which modern absolutisms have everywhere attacked or rooted out. Austria has never since dared openly to assail such liberties as the Hungarians then successfully defended; but it has prevented the development of the fruitful germ which is to be found in these institutions, by fomenting animosities between the Magyars and the rapidly increasing Sclavonic races. The progress of opinion amongst the Magyars took naturally the bent of an aristocratic liberalism. When educated, they are usually enthusiastic admirers of our British constitution, whilst the Sclavonians lean towards democratic opinions, and long repaid with aversion the contempt which was manifested by the lordly Magyars. Metternich felt safe though liberalism was making rapid

strides, because each of these powerful races sought dominion over, and was placed in antagonism to the other. The progress of enlightenment has, however, long since begun to convince both parties, that their best interests lie in the amalgamation of their nationalities, and in combinatlon against Austria. The hatred of both to despotism, their antipathy to the Germans; and their sympathy for the Poles (a Sclavonic people) are common ground on which fraternisation is being rapidly effected. Year by year, month by month, and week by week, the Magyar lords abandon their prejudice against Sclavonic villeinage; and corresponding advances are made by the Sclavonic democracy. Austria has, perhaps, still the power, in an eventful crisis, of exciting social rebellions, as it partially did in Hungary in 1831, and has recently done in Gallicia; but this state of things is rapidly disappearing, and the jealously guarded privileges of the Hungarian diet, and the exclusion by it of Germans from office, prevent the perpetuation by the Austrian cabinet of that darkness and ignorance in which its safety lies, and by the dissipation of which its dominion must be overturned.

The insurrection of the peasantry in Gallicia has been cited as a proof of the little co-operation to be expected in Poland from the bulk of the nation; it

is therefore well to observe to the reader, that the furthest extent of the recent jacquerie in Gallicia spread over a territory containing less than a quarter of a million souls. In these districts the peasantry only rose partially, and in others they defended their lords. It has been shown elsewhere that the clergy were here uninfluent, because the government were of the same religion as the peasantry, and that its agents could allege the support of Rome. This is an advantage nowhere else possessed by the spoliating powers. With the one exception of these districts, containing one-eightieth part of the Polish population, the peasantry have never, in this or any previous insurrection, shown anything but sympathy with their lords against the three governments, though they may have at other times rebelled against them. Even in those parts of Gallicia where these untoward events have taken place, the boors were excited through misrepresentation of the motives of the insurgents; but this deception will no longer be possible in any future emergency; and it is an undoubted fact that several of the insurgent fugitives, after narrowly escaping massacre, were chosen as leaders by the peasantry, when they slew the imperial commissioners, and refused to lay down their arms.

The author terms the insurrection ill-advised, because long anticipated, widely combined, and begun in an unfavourable season. Any extensive and long-concerted combination is naturally more liable to failure than a spontaneous appeal to the feelings of the people, because it is impossible that the meditated attempt should not sufficiently transpire to place the three governments upon their guard.

There is reason to know that the plans of the conspirators had been betrayed in their minutest details to the three powers, who were thus all prepared to frustrate their efforts—Russia and Prussia concentrating their military forces on the points designated for the movement, whilst Austria, which at first seemed taken by surprise, had its social mine prepared to spring under the footsteps of the insurgents.

Metternich, the man of astuteness and of wiles, chose characteristically rather to resort to these than to the employmeut of any of his three hundred thousand fighting men.

The impatience natural to men in a condition which we in England wonder that they should submit to for an hour, the despair of the peasantry, produced by the horrors of accidental famine, which decimates whole districts throughout the Sclavonic

countries, and the subsequent precautions taken by the three governments, which showed that their suspicions were awakened, all led to a premature attempt, made at a period when the general scarcity paralysed instead of favouring the operations of the insurgents, and in a season which rendered all guerilla warfare impossible, the trees being leafless, the frozen marshes accessible, the winter in its full severity, and the ground covered with snow, betraying every footstep. Frustrated in their attempt to seize the Prussian fortresses in the grand duchy of Posen, and prevented from rising by the presence of an overwhelming force in the localities selected in Russian Poland, the insurgents were only able to put their designs into execution on one single point—in the republic of Cracow, whose territories they seized, to the number of 400. Their conduct, whilst for ten days in possession of this city, was moderate and exemplary in the extreme. They easily raised some thousand men, but the season prevented the march of small insurrectionary columns; they were further discouraged by the bad news from Posen and the Russian provinces, and on the approach of the Austrian and Russian armies, resolved to evacuate Cracow, an open city, and to make for the Carpathian

mountains, there to await more favourable weather. But when they entered Gallicia to commence their guerilla campaign, they were assailed by sanguinary foes where they had counted on enthusiastic friends.

Meanwhile, though the projected movement was rendered impossible throughout Russian Poland, by the severity of the season and the concentration of a military force on the point chosen by the conspirators, the extensive ramifications of the conspiracy caused a shock which has been felt throughout the whole empire.

The arrest and punishment of personages the most highly connected in Little Russia, Moscow, and St. Petersburg, have taken place, whilst throughout the Polish cities the prisons are crowded and a reign of terror prevails.

A Prussian nurse, sent for to the family of W———, in Lithuania, relates, that at Warsaw she was detained for a fortnight by the authorities, who would not allow any one to proceed. The execution of Zarski and Kocisewski, two conspirators, or presumed conspirators, of whom an example was made, had just taken place. The whole city was filled with dread and plunged in mourning by the arrest of

hundreds of individuals. In the inn where this woman lodged she saw a Polish lady, who through peculiar interest was allowed to see her son, who had been imprisoned on suspicion. She was led into the prison and admitted to an interview only in the presence of witnesses, and on condition of remaining blindfolded. "Oh! my child!" said she,—"how hard that I cannot even see you." "It is well you cannot, mother," replied the prisoner in a voice so altered by suffering as to be scarcely recognisable, "for you would never know your own son." He dared say no more, nor give any further information; and the poor mother was led out, her imagination harrowed by the cruelties she concluded to have been practised on her child. The Russian government has recently so multiplied exiles to Siberia that it was judged advisable to put several victims to death—Zarski and Kociszewski, at Warsaw for supposed, and Pantaleon Potocki at Siedlce for a real attempt at rebellion. The population of Warsaw was invited to attend, the whole of the immense Russian garrison being under arms, the artillerymen with lighted matches standing beside their pieces, pointed on the crowd to prevent a rescue.

The citizens of Warsaw poured out by tens of

thousands, the complete and mournful silence of the multitude contrasting strangely with the merry tunes played in defiance of popular feeling by the Russian military band as the prisoners were led out to die. When they appeared upon the scaffold, the whole of the vast and silent crowd fell on their knees with one accord, and offered up a prayer for the victims about to suffer.

Though only an infinitesimal part of the mass of varied misery entailed by the vengeance of the three despotisms comes to light, we may judge of the extent of the disaffection amongst the populations of Eastern Europe by the difference in point of rank between the individuals affected, and the territorial distances between the localities disturbed.

In Posen, in Warsaw, and in Lithuania, the Polish nobles are implicated by thousands. In Gallicia the peasantry, roused by the intrigues of the Austrian government, massacre its commissioners and refuse to lay down their arms without the abolition of the *robot*, which according to all accounts Metternich is forced to concede.

In Silesia, in the Prussian dominions, where the peasantry are in the same condition, insurrectionary movements take place. In Bohemia we hear of the arrest of Count de Thun, always accounted a

mouthpiece of the Austrian government, though one of the Sclavonic party. In Bohemia, as in Silesia, the serf-peasantry also rise against the *robot*. In the Russian dominions we hear of the arrest of Madame Kalerdgi, the daughter of General Nesselrode, commanding the gendarmerie (the immediate executive of the secret police in the kingdom of Poland,) and brother of the Russian premier of that name, of whom an account is given in a previous chapter. This lady, to save one of those implicated in the late conspiracy, undertook to procure a passport, which through her father she was enabled to obtain, and with which her protegé escaped across the frontier. The deception was discovered and traced home to the unhappy lady, who was seized in the dead of night and sent off in custody to St. Petersburg. Though her father was minister for foreign affairs, she had been denied during several weeks all communications with her friends and family, and was reported to have been knouted and sent off to Siberia. More recent letters from St. Petersburg deny the fact of her having been knouted, alleging that the mistake must have originated in her being confounded with a Madame Orloff, who for participation in the recent attempt had received, not the knout, but the plitt. The

difference between the knout and plitt is, simply, that where the skilful executioner can give a mortal stroke with a single blow of the knout, it requires two of the plitt, which from the first of May is to replace it throughout the empire, by order of Nicholas; of whom we shall soon read in the German papers, that he has benevolently abolished that mode of punishment, without any mention of the slower torture substituted for it.

From this contradiction it thus appeared that not only a niece of the premier, but one of the family of the minister of the secret police, was equally implicated—the almost invariable result of every inquiry into Russian reports, that of discovering a trifling inaccuracy but at the same time bringing to light some deeper villainy or greater severity. It has since been said in a newspaper paragraph, that Madame Kalerdgi has been exiled to Dresden: the letters received from St. Petersburg make no mention of this modification of her sentence.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

WHEN the author published the first volumes of this work, he was almost startled at the magnitude of the conclusions to which his researches and intercourse with Eastern Europe had led him, and when he announced his conviction of the instability of the three great despotisms which in popular opinion were seated on so firm a foundation, he was duly prepared to find such sweeping denunciations as he had made, such extensive changes as he prognosticated, attributed in a greater measure to his imagination than his judgment. The brief space which has elapsed between the publication of the last and the present volume, has, however, given birth to events which which, without yet realising to their full extent his anticipations for the future, have proved to the world the substantial foundation of the growing discontent and increasing agitation which he had asserted to exist amongst races and

millions whose nationality and existence the great despotisms had hidden from the eyes of Europe, but which, like a buried Titan, convulses with its struggle the earth piled over it. The recent ill-advised insurrection must be regarded as one of many waves of that tide which no human power can stay.

Yet even this one ripple of the mighty flood impending has given rise to fearful scenes. These have taken place not years ago, nor in the heart of Africa or Asia, beyond the reach of our intercourse or influence; but in the territories of three powers, with whom the ministers of the nation are on such terms of diplomatic intimacy as not to dare express public disapproval of their conduct. They have been so recently enacted, that whilst the corn-law bill was undergoing discussion in the house of commons, hundreds of victims were suffering imprisonment in the Prussian dominions, torture in the Russian, and death in the Austrian territories, where half a century after the French revolution, all its horrors were revived; not in the struggles of an infuriated mob to overturn a corrupt monarchy, but at the cold-blooded instigation of a cabinet seeking to perpetuate a state of thraldom.

Deeply as we may lament the suffering consequent upon the failure of the rash attempt, it is not without its use as a sanguinary protest on the part of mutilated Poland, and of the oppressed Sclavonic races, against the bondage to which they have been given over. It is the loud cry of the political victim forcing itself upon the public ear of Western Europe, to dispel the illusions of that self-deception in which it has so long indulged, inclining to soothe its political conscience so willingly to the belief that half the population of the European continent, if kept in a state of ignorance and servitude, was still contented with its humble lot, and removed alike from the social miseries and popular disappointments as from the more elevated aspirations of a state of freedom.

There are those who give themselves credit for being men of humanity, and friends of peace, and who in their dread of war with its manifold inconveniences and ostentatious bloodshed, would rather that a hundred millions continued to endure through years and years an aggregate of a thousand fold more suffering, than see peace endangered. Anxious rather to keep closed than to upraise the veil which covered the reality, without approving, they sought to palliate the conduct of the three despotisms, and

flattered themselves that the races subjected had sunk into a state of quiescence which would prevent any further embarrassing appeals to their sympathies and humanity. The recent occurrences have proved, however, that it is not so. After half a century of servitude—after innumerable failures, and in the midst of all the terrors by which their tyrants seek to awe them, the whole Polish people is convulsed; showing amidst every portion of its partitioned twenty millions, an irreconcilable discontent with its condition. For half a century past one attempt has followed on the other, not successively more feeble, like the ebb of receding waters, but on the contrary, like the waves of a wind-driven tide, each more threatening than the former. It is no longer the agitation of classes or of portions of dismembered Poland only. Austrian and Prussian Poland are not tranquil whilst Russian Poland is convulsed, nor are the peasantry more disposed to be tranquil than the nobility. It is not even to Poland that the shock is confined. In Bohemia, Silesia, and Little Russia disturbances take place simultaneously, whilst the Croatian diet openly expresses its reprobation of the conduct of the Austrian government in Gallicia, and that Nicholas sees cause to punish in the families of his own confidential ser-

vants, sympathy with, or participation in the plans of the revolters.

The class of optimist politicians to whom allusion has been made, are hence painfully roused by these signs of the times from their illusion, and forced to acknowledge the storm that hangs brooding over Eastern Europe. Even those bent upon sacrificing every consideration to peace and determined to eschew all inquiry into questions which might give a hostile tendency to public feeling, must now perceive that the state of things they were so fearful of disturbing, is threatened with proximate and violent change. Another ten years will not pass over our heads without witnessing the outbreak of that political tempest, which the spirit of concession has averted in the West, but of which the elements, arrested in Eastern Europe by the resistance of absolutism, are accumulating silently but threateningly, like dammed up waters, gathering to burst through their bounds.

In considering these great facts any prospect of change will be deemed hopeful by those conversant with the condition of Eastern Europe, and who look only to the well-being of nearly a hundred and twenty millions of their fellow men; but even those whose rule of conduct is most selfishly utili-

tarian, must admit that since events, over which our policy has no control, have rendered chimerical the *statu quo* of the Russian, Austrian, and Prussian states through another dozen years; and since the acceptation of the principles of free trade have rendered impossible that political isolation once so warmly advocated, that this may not be an inopportune moment briefly to examine the result to ourselves of the last thirty years misrule of these vast populations by the three despotisms, which owe their existence to the resources of Great Britain, which enabled them to resist the aggression of Napoleon, and to whose discretion so many millions of human beings were abandoned by us at the Congress of Vienna; or rather through our subsequent neglect. What is the account which, after thirty years, they can give us of these fertile territories and innumerable subjects? Have the interests of humanity or our national interests gained anything by their domination? or has even one of these interests profited at the expense of the other? No: on the contrary, tens upon tens of millions linger in poverty, servitude, and misery; and we have been deprived of incalculable gains, which, but for the system of these crowned heads, we might have made, and which would equally have benefited those who are now their subjects.

If we take into account the productiveness of soil and the facilities which the nature of the country's surface affords for inter-communication by canals or railroads, together with the agricultural pursuits of the inhabitants in the territories of the Russian and Austrian empires, and in more than one half of the Prussian kingdom, it would be natural to conclude that our imports and exports thither ought proportionately to the population far to exceed those of such countries as France, Belgium, and Holland, densely peopled, or with a soil exhausted, or which have made considerable progress in manufacturing industry.

A very large portion of Eastern Europe is still as much in the position of a new country as the United States, but without the drawback of some thousand miles of intervening Atlantic. We have, therefore, a right to calculate, that if left to follow without artificial restrictions the bent of its natural productive and commercial tendencies, it would in this respect rather be comparable to the United States than even to Western Europe.

Our direct exports to Russia, Austria, and the eastern half of Prussia, do not exceed three-and-a-half millions sterling for one huudred and seven millions of inhabitants. Now to France,

Belgium, and Holland, countries with lesser facilities of produce, large manufacturing establishments, and a population of only forty-two millions, our exports amount to seven millions sterling annually; that is to say, that in the constitutional countries of Western Europe, every six millions of the inhabitants import on an average one million pounds sterling worth of our manufactured goods and produce, whereas under the despotisms of Eastern Europe, thirty millions and a half of the population cannot afford quite a million's worth between them.

It would be little to expect from these countries, possessed of far greater natural resources than the west of Europe, that, if enjoying the advantage of free government which the west possesses over them, (the sole cause to which we can assign its superior prosperity,) that their consumption of British merchandise should at least be in equal ratio with that of France, Belgium, and Holland.

This sum would raise the value of our exports to those countries from three-and-a-half millions to eighteen, making a difference of more than fourteen millions sterling annually, which is lost to British industry through the unnatural and oppressive government of more than one-eighth of the human

race by the three European despotisms, whose dominion is upheld by a proportionate abstraction from the material comforts, to say nothing of the moral degradation, of more than a hundred millions of their fellow creatures.

In this estimate the author has not made out an extreme case. Really Eastern Europe, with immense tracts of virgin soil and magnificent resources, ought to be rated for productive and consumptive capabilities rather with the United States than with Western Europe; and there is in fact every natural reason in the world why it should for half a century to come prove a better customer than even the United States, to the manufacturing communities of Europe. Now the inhabitants of the United States take one million sterling worth of our exports amongst something less than three millions and a half of the population; so that applying this average to Eastern Europe, our exports thither ought to be thirty millions instead of three-and-a-half; and we might estimate annually at twenty-six and a half instead of fourteen millions of pounds sterling, the annual loss to the British people.

This consideration furnishes at once a reply to the argument by which so many political iniquities

have been covered, that it is our duty to look exclusively to the prosperity and advantage of our own people, leaving other nations to shift for themselves.

The deeply-rooted moral feeling which is blent and often militates in the national character with a very acute and practical sense of its material interests, has for some years past led the British people to suspect the soundness of this selfish principle; and to this feeling may probably be attributed the deep interest evinced in the fate of the enslaved Africans, and proved by the real pecuniary sacrifices made in their favour by those who are unwilling even to contemplate encountering the hazards of strife in helping to redress a wrong comparatively colossal.

It may in fact be compared to the conscience money, of which the receipt is occasionally acknowledged by the chancellor of the exchequer, from anonymous defrauders of the revenue, who having acquired wealth in illicit trade or industry, relieve their lingering uneasiness of mind by the restoration of a few tens, or hundreds of pounds, as an instalment towards restitution of their illegal gains, which amount to a whole fortune.

But it is a great point gained that this national

conscience is awakened. Its own workings could not fail to lead the nation to the eventual conclusion that it has not been endowed by Providence with power, wealth, civilisation, means of intercommunication and creative industry, incomparably greater than any people recorded in history ever possessed, for the sole gratification of its individual selfishness, whilst so large a portion of the earth is still plunged in misery and darkness. The time is undoubtedly approaching when no man will dare publicly meet the appeals of nations to our sympathy and protection by the question, "*what is it to us?*" or by the more specious maxim, that "*as patriots, we have no right to endanger the interests of our fellow-citizens in the behalf of strangers.*"

But how much more imperatively does it behove us to examine into the condition of Eastern Europe and to extend our countenance and sympathy, our mediation and protection, to its oppressed millions, when we reflect that—in addition to the dictates of conscience and humanity—the eventual maintenance of the present order of things has grown impossible; that an act of our legislature is being passed which in its political consequences resembles the burning of his fleet by Cortez, cutting off retreat and obliging us to adventurous advance in the

civilisation of the world; and especially when we remember that if we have become narrowly interested in the prosperity and well-being of the whole of humanity, we can form even an approximative money estimate of advantages of which the misrule of Eastern Europe deprives us; and that whilst the positive sufferings and negative deprivation of enjoyment of its inhabitants are incalculable, we can reply to the question, "*what is it to the British people?*" by the answer, that it is between fourteen and thirty millions annually out of their pockets, and that the thirty-one years of their maladministration have practically cost the nation between two and three hundred millions.

Neither are we without the means of giving weight to our intercession or remonstrance. We have seen that the tendency to resolve into its primitive elements, exhibited by the discordant materials from which the three blood-cemented despotisms have been upreared—without anything to give them stability except the weight of oppression, whose balance may be so easily destroyed; they are everywhere so vulnerable and accessible, that they would probably dissolve before the mere volition of Western Europe, but at any rate there hangs menacing over them on the side of France, an ava-

lanche of eager bayonets, which we can stay or bid roll onwards. The time is come, when France may be trusted to advance her own cause, ours, and that of humanity, by constitutional propagandism. Constitutional forms of government have overspread—as a reference to the political map accompanying this work will show—one half the continent of Europe. They are gradually gaining ground, and to believe in their retrogression, would be to doubt the progress of civilisation; to indulge in the gloomy foreboding that Providence had endowed the human race with all the requisites for social progress, only to doom mankind to the disappointment of finding them eventually barren, when every cause in nature is fruitful of some result. Even whilst these pages are going through the press, there is reason to believe that an important convert to these opinions has been made in the person of the King of Sardinia—a man who with some antecedents which probably may be explained away, others which undoubtedly require redeeming, appears to be entering on a course which may not alone redeem his former conduct, but entitle him to the gratitude of humanity, and conduce to his own fame by giving him a glorious place in the van of the many, whose opinions must

eventually triumph in that great movement preparing against the absolutisms of Eastern Europe by their own subjects, with whom the sympathies of the constitutional west are daily more warmly enlisting as that intercourse and knowledge increases, which can only augment its antipathy and hostility to despotism, because demonstrating more clearly as they progress, that moral elevation, material prosperity, and the extension of the most beneficial forms of civilisation, are wholly incompatible with despotism, and everywhere impossible without the fostering warmth of freedom and the light of publicity; a position to the elucidation of which the author hopes not vainly to have devoted these volumes.

APPENDIX.

THE author has been induced to collect in an appendix the following documents, authenticative of the narrative of the Basilian nuns, whose persecution has heen attempted to be described as an utter fable in certain newspaper paragraphs, and in particular in the two notes presented by M. de Boutenief to the papal cabinet, the one before, the other after the pretended inquiry into the matter by the Russian government.

Those who are not sufficiently well acquainted with the oriental state of Russian society, to know that the higher Russian dignities do not any more ensure veracity in so distinguished a diplomatist as M. de Boutenief, than office about the imperial person, common honesty—of which an example has been furnished by the suite of the empress, who recently plundered the apartments of the King of Naples, the host of her imperial majesty—may have considered his assertion, that the story of the nuns of Minsk was from beginning to end a fabrication,

conclusive refutation of a tale whose unparalleled horrors bore *prima facie* evidence of improbability.

The pith of the Russian diplomatist's contradiction is, that no such person as Macrena Mieczyslawska was ever abbess of the convent of Minsk, or ever known there or elsewhere in Russian Poland. He further states that "the mother-general of the order, the Princess Euphrosina Giedymin, mentioned by her, died at Rome 600 years ago." The falsehood of both these allegations is at once proved by reference to all the printed calendars prior to 1838, in which Macrena Mieczyslawska's name is given as fulfilling the office in question, as well as that of Christina Clara Giedymin, who took the name of Euphrosina on entering the order. Macrena Mieczyslawska had been fifteen years abbess of the convent of Minsk in 1838, so that hundreds of persons in the emigration have been able to identify her. To suppose that in so high a grade of the Romish hierarchy she should have been able to impose an imaginary title on the papal cabinet is as preposterous as to imagine that any impostor could pass as a Russian general with the Russian minister of war, without duly founded claims to that rank. Boutenief's note was therefore undoubtedly intended not to deceive the Pope, but the press of Europe.

No. I.

OFFICIAL NOTE PRESENTED TO THE POPE, BY M. DE BOUTENIEF, ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF RUSSIA AT THE COURT OF ROME.

"A Polish journal published at Paris, under the title of *The Third of May*, has disseminated the strangest narratives relative to certain persecutions which the Archbishop of Lithuania, Joseph Siemaszko, designated as having formerly filled the office of confessor in the convent of the Basilian nuns at Kowno, is alleged to have instituted against the women, in order to force them to embrace the Greek religion. According to this journal, the nuns in question, to the number of forty-seven, were seized in the night-time by Cossacs—forced to walk to Witebsk (a town which, it is pretended, is twenty miles from Kowno)—shut up in an orthodox convent, and forced to act as servants to the Russian nuns, who every Friday administered to each fifty blows of a cane. It is next declared that the archbishop threw them into irons, condemned each to such hard labour as is assigned to felons; that they were made to suffer hunger and thirst, and to render the privation of drink more severe, they were fed on

salt herrings. It is added that some were obliged to take part in the construction of the episcopal palace, often remaining in the water up to their necks; that others were employed in the mines; that eight had their eyes forced out; and thirty fell victims to that odious persecution, and only three had succeeded in effecting their escape into Austria; as to the superior, she had arrived in Paris. These calumnies were eagerly reproduced in the *Univers*, and in most of the French journals; they are represented as based on the depositions of the superior, who figures in the matter under the name of Mieczyslawska. In the recitals of this woman, the number of nuns is no longer confined to forty-seven, they are at once quintupled, reaching the number of 240, of whom 120 are stated to have been exiled to Siberia; out of that number upwards of one-half are alleged to have miserably perished on the road, and the rest are represented as about in all probability to soon share the same fate. The names of Wawrzecha, Konarska, and Pomawnocka, are those by which the three nuns who took refuge in Austria are designated. It is also stated, that 346 monks of the order of St. Basil, were likewise exiled to Siberia; that three of their heads, named Berinski, Zilinski, and Zeleniez, expired at Polosk under

the torture that they were forced to endure from iced water being poured on their bodies, and that the fourth, named Zaniecki, was killed with a blow of a hatchet. Finally, it is pretended, that all the populations of these countries are, without ceasing, cruelly beaten and exposed to all kinds of atrocities; that even children are not spared, and that seventeen of these latter were whipped to death in the town of Minsk. In dilating on this theme, the periodical prints have been careful to add other diatribes, and, as a wind-up, state that the *soi-disant* Mieczyslawska, to whom all these recitals are attributed, has proceeded to Marseilles and thence to Rome, receiving on her passage the liveliest marks of sympathy, and a large amount of money in alms. Without entering into any discussion on the subject of these assertions, which are as absurd as they are malevolent, it is intended in the present note to point out what, from the nature of things, is necessarily false, in the alleged facts. First of all, in order that a persecution could be instituted against the convent of Basilian nuns, at Kowno, it would be requisite that such a convent should exist; and in this respect, the authors of the imposture ought to have taken the pains of obtaining some information. But it is certain that no convent

of Basilian nuns ever did exist in the town of Kowno, nor in the whole extent of the province of that name. The present Bishop of Lithuania, Joseph Siemaszko, has never been confessor of any convent of Basilian nuns. No prelate in Russia, whatever may be his grade in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, has Cossacks at his order or disposal. Kowno happens to be, not 20 miles from Witebsk, but double that distance, about 300 versts. No Basilian nun has been transferred to a Russian monastery; they have all remained in their own convents, except such as having a desire to go and live with their relations of the Roman Catholic religion, obtained permission from the archbishop alluded to above. Undoubtedly, if this prelate had to upbraid himself with such revolting conduct as that imputed to him, he would not now have consented to this last-named arrangement, which offered his victims so much facility for spreading through the country their accusations and their complaints. The means of existence of the Basilian nuns have not been reduced; but, on the contrary, have been augmented by new grants which convents of this order have of late years been accorded in Russia. The Archbishop of Lithuania, Joseph Siemaszko, has never exercised any authority over

he convents in Witebsk and Polosk, inasmuch as they belong to another diocese. Throughout the whole extent of the empire of Russia, the criminal jurisdiction and the infliction of corporal punishment fall to the lot, not of the ecclesiastical authorities, but exclusively of the secular power. Never are women employed in Russia in works relating to building, and never has the archbishop, Joseph Siemaszko, erected a palace. He, for the most part, lives at St. Petersburgh, and possesses no house of his own. The archiepiscopal palace at Wilna, destined to his use, was purchased by the Crown in 1843 from Count Mostowski, marshal of the nobility of that government. No person in modern times has ever heard of any criminal whatever, and still less of any poor women, being forced to undergo the torture of hunger and thirst; of their being wetted with iced water, or plunged into it; or of having their eyes put out. There are no mines in Russia, except in Siberia and in the government of Olodetz. No Basilian could have been employed in the mines, inasmuch as none were transported from the western provinces of the empire, where there are no mines. Previously to 1839 there were in Russia nine convents of Basilian nuns, inhabited not by

240 women, but by only 55, of whom 35 belonged to the diocese of Lithuania. No one of these ever fled from the cloister, and no mention has been as yet made in any report, of any of those who went to live with their relations having fled to a foreign country. It is an indisputable fact that in Russia there have never been Basilian nuns known by the names of Mieczyslawska, Wawrzecha, Konarska, and Pomawnocka, attributed by the periodical press to these pretended martyrs. It is also a fact, that no monk has been transported to Siberia from the number of the Basilians. It is certain, that in the Basilian monasteries of the empire there never have been either superiors or simple monks of the names of Berinski, Zilinski, Zeleniez, or Zaneicki, who are alleged to have expired in horrible tortures. Before 1839 there were in Russia 14 Basilian monasteries, containing 267 monks, and not 347, as the journals allege, and in the diocese of Lithuania there were only 165 monks of this order. It would be superfluous to carry further the examination of the other erroneous assertions propagated on this occasion by the periodical press. The facts which have been just cited are sufficient to assign to them their real value, and to show what ought to be attached to the existence of the 47 martyrs,

who obtained in the church of St. Roch the honour of funeral service, celebrated with so much solemnity. As to the pretended Abbess Mieczyslawska, the Russian government is completely ignorant of who she is. It belongs to the authorities of the country where she happens to be, to discover who and what she is, in order to unmask those odious manœuvres conceived in hatred of Russia, as well as to lay bare an imposture, carried on with a view to excite the sympathy of the compassionate, and draw from them important sums of money as alms. The imperial government, notwithstanding the censorship to which it subjects foreign journals, has authorised the free circulation of the articles in question throughout the whole extent of Russia, without excepting the provinces that are said to have served as the theatres of the persecutions in question. The inhabitants of these countries, ocular witnesses of what has passed there, will thus be able to appreciate, at their just value, the errors, at the same time clumsy and calumnious, which are published in other kingdoms on the internal state of their country."

No. II.

LETTER FROM PRINCE ADAM CZARTORYSKI, IN REPLY TO THE NOTE OF M. DE BOUTENIEF.

To the Editor of the Journal des Debats.

"All the journals of Paris, and the entire press of Europe, have repeated the account of the persecutions exercised against the Basilian nuns of Minsk. Numerous motives, independently of a consideration for her character, made it imperious on the part of Russia not only to contradict the assertions of the abbess of Minsk, but to expose some manifest falsehoods, easy to discover amidst numerous, varied, and often minute assertions, as respects persons and places. Why, for instance, did not that government obtain a denial, signed by some of the Basilian nuns whom the Russian government permitted, as is affirmed in the note, when they had refused to conform to the Greek schism, to retire among the Catholic members of their families? No such document has appeared.

"Instead of that, an anonymous writer asserted, in a German journal, that there existed no Basilian convent at Minsk, and that no such establishment had ever existed in that town. Persons who have

resided at Minsk, and are ready to give their names, declare that they had known and visited at Minsk that Basilian convent, and the girls' school attached to it.

"Now, we have an official act of the Russian government, denying distinctly every fact related by the abbess Mieczyslawska, and calling her an impostor. To substantiate that denial, what does that government do? In presence of the thousand voices of the press, which repeated the account, it has picked out a single journal, written in the Polish language, and published at Paris, under the title of *The Third of May*. Why that preference? It is because that journal, in announcing the escape of the abbess Mieczyslawska, in September last, mentioned that she had been expelled, with her companions, from a convent situate at *Kowno*. In its following number its error was corrected, and Minsk was substituted in the place of Kowno.

Now, it is merely against the assertion of the journal, *The Third of May*, that the Russian note protests. It denounces as a hideous falsehood a statement admitted to be erroneous, and whilst all the journals of Europe, and all the publications on the subject, have invariably spoken of the convent of Minsk, the Russian note of January does

not even mention the name of that town, and confines itself to affirm that no Basilian convent ever existed at Kowno.

"Such an oversight in an official document, so long preparing, dispenses us from refuting the other assertions. The denials relative to the habits of Russia and her government are little in accord with the accounts published by all the travellers who have lately visited that country. Some of them are contradicted in the reports, regarded as authentic, and contained amongst the documents annexed to the allocation of the Pope respecting Poland, made public in 1842.

"As respects the narrative of the abbess of Minsk, wherever it was heard from her own lips, at Posen, Paris, and Rome, where she appeared before the highest ecclesiastical authorities, it has invariably inspired an absolute confidence and respect for the martyrs. Time, we have no doubt, will afford material evidence of its rigid correctness. However, it should be borne in mind that the corroboration of any facts passing in Russia, places in the greatest peril the life and liberty of the witness, without in the lest affecting the accused.

ADAM CZARTORYSKI.

No. III.

The official note of M. de Boutenief has created doubts in the minds of many, as to whether the Basilian nuns ever did exist at Minsk. The following is a certificate from four sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, who affirm that they have been in correspondence with that convent. We take it from the *Univers* :—

"We, the undersigned, Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, arrived but lately in France, being driven from the province of Lithuania by the persecutions we had to endure from the Russian government, persecutions which ended in the dissolution of our society at Wilna, declare and certify to have had, through our sisters at Minsk, frequent correspondence with the nuns of the Basilian convent existing at Minsk. It is with full confidence, and to render justice to truth, we affirm that a convent of Basilian nuns did exist at Minsk, and we sign the present certificate.

"Paris, the 8th day of March, 1846, at the house of the Sisters of Charity, of the Order of St. Casimir, Rue de Ivry, No. 1.

THEOPHILE MILRUTOWSKA,
ISABELLE DOMBROWSKA,
JOSEPHINE MINUTOWSKA,
LOUISE KURINNTA, Sisters of Charity."

Daily News, March 13.

No. IV.

To the Editor of the Times.

Sir,—Having seen in *The Times*, a statement put forth by the Russian government, impugning the truth of the account given by the Abbess Mieczyslawska, of the persecution which she, together with other Basilian nuns, endured at the hands of the Russians, I think it my duty to state, that being at Posen in the month of July last, I saw the Abbess Mieczyslawska, in the convent of the Sisters of Charity, in that city, on the very day on which she arrived there. She bore all the appearance of one having just completed a long and painful pilgrimage; her feet were swollen frightfully, and it was with great difficulty she could walk.

She was interrogated in my presence by the Sisters of Charity, who informed me that they had seen on her person the marks of the blows and stripes she had received. I afterwards saw her at the country house of a nobleman, a few miles from Posen, to which she had been invited. She came accompanied by the superior of the convent of Posen and by another Sister of Charity, who had also escaped from Russia.

I there again heard the account of her sufferings, which filled all present with indignation and horror.

I have no doubt that by some means or other, the whole story now so boldly contradicted by the Russians, will be thoroughly sifted, and its truth established; but I think it my duty to say that I never saw any person bearing less the appearance of an impostor, and that all present on both occasions after having carefully interrogated her, were convinced of the truth of her statements.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ANNE BIRT.

March 14.

P.S. As I am unknown to you, I enclose my card and address, together with a note from the Archbishop of Dublin.

Times, March 17.

No. IV.

LETTER OF A RUSSIAN TO THE CONSTITUTIONEL NEWSPAPER.

Sir,

I am a Russian, and I love my country. It is on this account that my best wishes, like those of many other Russians, are offered up for the success of the Polish insurrection. The oppression of Poland is disgraceful to my country, and its liberation might prove the commencement of ———.

My object in addressing you is, however, to bring forward my evidence as an honest man, in a transaction which now engrosses the attention of the French papers,—I allude to the religious persecution of the Basilian nuns in Lithuania.

For my own part I am convinced of the truth of the fact denounced by those nuns. I believe them to be true, because I know that they are probable, and that I am aware how unhappily in Russia all evil that can possibly happen never fails to become a reality. The political and administrative organisation of that country is such that it renders good impracticable, and makes a necessity of evil.

The first consideration on the case in point is the

following: whether it be possible that the Russian government, however despotic, can have resorted to violence as a means of religious propagandism? I am sorry to say that this does not admit of a doubt. Everybody in Russia knows to what illegal oppression, and often atrocious measures, the Russian authorities have resorted to, to oblige the inhabitants of Lithuania and Little Russia to change their religious faith. These acts of violence, systematically pre-ordained and sanctioned by the emperor, could not remain unknown to him.

Lithuania, as well as Little Russia, belonged in the sixteenth century to the kingdom of Poland, then passed over from the Greek to the Roman Catholic faith, accepting all the dogmas of the latter, and recognising the supremacy of the Pope; whilst on the other hand, the Council of Florence, which called them United Greeks, allowed them to retain the rites of the Greek Church. Little by little, however, ancient forms became obliterated, so that already in the eighteenth century it became impossible to distinguish any difference between the United Greeks and the Roman Catholics. This change, as well as the introduction of the union into a part of these provinces, and principally into the Ukraine, was not effected without some diffi-

culty; and the means resorted to then by the Jesuits, whose influence in Poland was one of the chief causes of its downfall, bear a close resemblance to those now employed by the imperial government. This, however, was past and done with, and the population having forgotten the sufferings of its fathers, is now sincerely attached to this new faith, which, as I have just observed, offers no sensible difference from the Roman Catholic. To Russianise Poland, such is, since 1831, the reigning idea with Nicholas—and one, it must be added, perfectly logical, since, inimical to a free or independent Poland, his policy must naturally tend to the destruction of its nationality. To attain this object three things were necessary: 1stly, extinction of the Polish language; 2ndly, the submission of the Polish courts to the Russian; 3rdly, the establishment of the state religion on the ruin of the United Greek and Roman Catholic Church. My space would not allow me, Mr. Editor, here to draw a complete picture of the acts of the Russian government, I shall therefore only attach myself to the explanation of the third of these points.

It was necessary for the Russian government to begin with White Russia and Lithuania. You must certainly have perceived, sir, that the policy

of Russia consists of two chief elements,—it commonly begins by fraud and terminates by violence. You shall hear the means employed to open the true path to the unhappy dissidents.

With a pretended anxiety to enforce to the latter the decrees of the council of Florence, the Russian Government began by rendering obligatory the permission formerly given the United Greeks, to use the Greek rites. It proceeded with a few changes in the decorations of churches and in the vestments of the priests,—changes which began to be violently carried out, because no heed was taken of their remonstrance, whilst the recusants were imprisoned. In 1838, however, the government adopting a bolder line of policy, determined on striking a great blow. The Bishop Semiasko, who was the soul of this undertaking, convoked the clergy at Polotsk in a sort of council, composed of a small number of bishops and priests, of which one portion was gained over by promises, the other intimidated by threats. In this council the union of the United Greeks with the Russian church was unanimously voted, and a deputation, under the presidence of Semiasko, dispatched to St. Petersburg, begging the emperor to allow his very humble dissident subjects to renounce their heresy. "I thank

God and I accept," was the reply of Nicholas. The deputies were loaded with honours, presents, distinctions. Each day Te Deums were celebrated; and whilst this farce was being enacted in St. Petersburg, blood had already begun to flow in Lithuania and White Russia. The emperor then dispatched Semiasko thither with full powers to act, and enjoining the civil and military authorities to render him all necessary succour and assistance. The dissident population almost unanimously protested against the council of Polotsk. Local revolts took place in consequence, many peasants were shot, others perished under the knout; a still greater number were exiled to Siberia, either to the mines or as colonists. A large number of the non-conformist clergy shared a like fate. Some were imprisoned and tortured. Yes, sir, tortured; for though torture has been abolished by an ukase of Catherine the Second, it continues to be used even in Russia Proper in criminal prosecutions;—not towards nobles, unless they are political offenders, but frequently towards the people.

Notwithstanding these barbarous measures, the non-conformists still resisted the arbitrary pretensions of the Russian government, and we have a proof of it in the affair of the Basilian nuns.

After what I have related, you will admit that we have no right to disbelieve the assertions of Madame Mieczyslowska, on the plea of incredibility. Such a man as Semiasko is capable of anything. As to the insults and cruel treatment to which the Basilian nuns had to submit from the Russian nuns, I find nothing improbable in it. The greater number of Russian convents are filled by dissolute and ignorant persons, who, accustomed from their earliest infancy to every species of brutality, commonly spend their time between the mechanical recitation of prayers, gossip, and a state of drunkenness.

It will readily be understood how such recluses would receive unprotected women accused of heresy and disobedience te the emperor.

Let us now ask, was the Emperor Nicholas aware of all this? Is it possible that he can himself have commanded these atrocities?

Mr. Editor, I do not wish to be unjust, not even towards the emperor, who has been so towards many. I am, however, bound to speak the truth. The condemnations and executions which I have mentioned were all sanctioned and ordered by the emperor. He certainly did not order Semiasko to break the jaws of poor nuns, but he ordered him to

act with all the severity of the Russian laws. I am convinced that if the emperor had any decided wish to prevent such unjust and sanguinary scenes of violence from being enacted in his empire, all these atrocities would not have taken place.

The facts which I have mentioned, I can answer for, because employed for some time in Lithuania in a military capacity.

If I were not afraid of trespassing on your attention, I could cite to you many instances to prove that when O'Connell said "that no country on the face of the earth had been so cruelly treated as Ireland, that he must obviously have spoken in ignorance of the barbarous conduct of the Russian agents in Poland.

The administration of Poland is only composed of men who having no object but to rise in rank, and to enrich themselves by any means, strive to distinguish themselves by their zeal; and this zeal consists in the discovery of conspiracies, and in the assiduous pursuit of real or supposed conspirators.

You will be pleased to remember, sir, that the Russian government strives after nothing less than the total annihilation of Polish nationality, in its customs, religious faith, and native tongue; that

it punishes as treason, all that is contrary to the emperor's wishes, and that all prosecutions and condemnations are carried on in a wholly arbitrary form; that all those conducting these prosecutions, down to the lowest Russian officials, are endowed with almost absolute authority over every Pole with whom they come in contact. Sum up these things, and you will be enabled to form an idea of the sufferings of that noble and unhappy people.

I am, &c. &c.,

M. BAKOUNINE.

Paris, 6th of Feb. 1846.

No. V.

ANSWER TO THE ADDITIONAL NOTE DATED FROM ST. PETERSBURG, MARCH, 1846.

"The venerable nun whom it pleases the author of the addtional note to call 'the woman Mieczyslawska,' never assumed the title of Abbess of the convent of Kowno. We defy the Russian diplomatists to cite from among the numerous persons who have seen and conversed with her since her arrival within the Prussian territories, a single witness worthy of credit who heard her

take this quality. In the first declaration made before the Archbishop of Posen, two months before the publication of the article of the journal the *Third of May*, she took her true title of Abbess of Minsk. The error into which the journal the *Third of May* had fallen, was rectified the next day by that journal and by the *Univers*. Thus vanishes the first part of addition No. 1. Remains the title of Abbess of Minsk. The author of this second note is forced to confess that, in the first note, it was carefully concealed that in the said town of Minsk there did exist a convent of Basilian nuns, and to acknowledge that the mother Makrena did not arrogate to herself an imaginary title. Thus is confirmed, by the admissions of Russia herself, the existence of this convent, the reality of which has been wilfully denied; thus is confirmed the testimony of the old inhabitants of Lithuania, and particularly that of the Sisters of Charity at Wilna, as well as that of the Marquis de Narp, an officer who was in the service of the French army in 1812, now resident at Rome, all of whom attest the fact from having been eye-witnesses of it. Driven to speak of the Basilian nuns at Minsk, the note gives its history from 1834, and pretends that at that period it was converted into an hos-

pital. This assertion is completely false. In 1835 the convent still belonged to the Basilian nuns, and by the fire which in that year reduced Minsk to ashes the convent suffered severely. All the wealthy inhabitants of the town witnessed the mother Makrena, with the sisters Wawrnecka and Konarska, demanding and receiving contributions towards the reparation of the damages their convent had sustained. It was not till 1838 that it was suppressed by the violent expulsion of the nuns. As to the augmentation of revenue and other advantages of which the note speaks, favours still enjoyed by the superior of the convent transferred from Minsk, there is the same sophistry, the same falsehood as was inserted in the first note. If it be true that the revenues of some convents have been increased by fresh grants, it has been most assuredly only for the benefit of such nuns as have embraced the schism, and not of those who have refused to do so; since these last have been treated as servitors and prisoners, and as no longer forming a legal community. Besides, it is literally false to assert that any new revenues have been conferred upon religious establishments, since the Russian government, after having seized their estates and property, has replaced the ample incomes derived

from them by very small pensions. Consequently there is an evident falsity in this second part of the first addition. No person can be made to believe that the Russian government, which had seized the property of the convents, can have augmented revenues no longer in existence, that they can have been augmented in favour of nuns considered to be rebellious heretics, and that these grants have been continued up to the present day. The fact referred to in the addition, No. 5, has never been disputed. It has not been denied that some nuns may, on account of the state of their health, have been allowed to return to their Catholic families; but it is affirmed that these returns have all been anterior to the cruel persecutions of 1838. Addition 12. The note affects to give the names of the superiors of the convents existing in 1839. Here it again falls into voluntary error. Thus, the superior of Grodno was not Baikowna, but Maliszewska; that of Witebsk was not Kasimerska, but Kostrowna. From this let the confidence merited by the writers of the note be judged when they say that Makrena Mieczyslawska was not abbess of Minsk. It may be that in 1839 there were only nine convents of Basilian nuns in Russia, for at that period persecution was already old. It

must be concluded that persecution had already borne its fruits; for previously there were at least fifteen of these convents in Russia—viz. those of Wilna, Grodno, Pinsk, Orza, Minsk, Polotck, Witebsk, Novogrodesk, Zyrovice, Slonim, Boruny, Bereswecz, Czaszwiki, Biala, and Poczajow. These convents were inhabited by 245 nuns, as is proved by the calendars of the order printed before the persecution. The convent of Minsk alone reckoned 35. If, therefore, there were no more than 55 nuns in all, there would remain only 20 for the other 14 convents, or one and a half for each. It is added that no change has been made in the interior discipline of the convents. Nothing, certainly, beyond the religious faith and the persons of their inhabitants—the old faith has been made to give place to a schism, and the inhabitants have become Greco-Russians, or have been martyrised for remaining faithful to their creed. With these exceptions, it is true that there has been very little change. The note concludes with two allegations —the first of which is founded on a slight mistake, which it vainly endeavours to exaggerate; and the second of which is branded with flagrant bad faith. It is true that the governor of Minsk was not named Uzakoff. The mistake arose from

the similitude between the two names Suzkoff and Uzakoff, and not Usrakoff or Souchkoff, as the note with a view to delude, wishes to represent. It was in truth General Suzkoff who was governor of Minsk at the time of the persecution. It may easily be imagined the ear of the abbess, or of those who took down her testimony, may have misapprehended the sound. It will be easy to appreciate the declaration which the note attributes to General Suszkoff, when it is known that this personage is a man of cruel and despotic character, sent at that period to Minsk precisely to be the executor of those pitiless orders against the Catholics whom it was determined to force by whatever means to apostacise. In the second place, the note joins irony to falsehood in affirming that the Princess Euphrosina Giedymin, who is brought to life in 1838, died at Rome more than 600 years ago. We inform the learned author of the note, that Christina Clara Giedymin, who took the name of Euphrosina on becoming a nun, was visitress general of the order of Basilian Nuns; that she is the person designated under the name of Mother-General, a title given to her according to custom, and that she it was who perished miserably when she was being conveyed to Siberia. It will be seen that the

author of the note is little versed in genealogies, though he pretends to have consulted them. It will not be out of place to make him acquainted with that of the nun whom he persists in calling the woman Mieczyslawska. Makrena Mieczyslawska belongs to a distinguished family of Poland, allied to the princely family of Wistgenstein. She is the daughter of Joseph Mieczyslawski and Anna Jagullo, daughter of Casimir and Hedwige. She was born at Stokliszki, the estate of her parents, in the ancient palatinate of Troki, in 1784. She is not the only member of her family who has suffered for religion. One of her brothers, Calixt Mieczyslawski, who took the name of Onuphrees on entering the order of Saint Basil, was on his refusal to forsake his religion, put into a cart and so tightly bound that he perished on the way to Smolensko. Two of his companions, Szozerbwiski and Chryanowski, died with him in the same cart; and a fourth, Zolkowski, expired on arriving at Smolensko. We will add that mother Makrena entered the order of St. Basil at the age of twenty-three, in the convent of Biala, of which her maternal aunt, Isabella Jagullo, was abbess. Several months afterwards she went to the convent of Minsk, where she remained and performed almost all the duties of the establish-

ment until the moment when the abbess Kuleska, having become infirm, Makrena took her charge for three years and succeeded her as abbess at her death in 1823. In her quality of abbess she was present at the elections of the abbesses of Wilna and Bereswecz. We have destroyed one by one the allegations of the additional note, and we deliver the new errors with which it is filled, and its most cruel condemnation, to the indignation and contempt of all upright and impartial minds.

Rome, April 1846.

THE END.

London; Printed by G. Lilley, 148, Holborn-bars.

ERRATA.

Page 207, line 14, *for* "Russian," *read* "Prussian."

„ „ last line, *for* "brought with, and" *read* "brought with him, and".

Page 238, line 15, *for* "other states," *read* "Poland."

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21.

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek
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Henningsen, C. F.,

Eastern Europe and the Emperor Nicholas By the author of 'Revelations of Russia' [Nikolaus I., Kaiser v. Rußland]

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